Dorset
National
Landscape

DRAFT

MANAGEMENT

PLAN

2026-2031

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OUR VISION

The Dorset National Landscape Partnership is working towards a future in which the management of the landscape and designation enables people to live in harmony with nature. The vision is for a stunningly beautiful, well-protected landscape in which:

- Nature thrives, not just in protected areas and reserves but across the whole landscape. There is a well-linked, expanded network of high-quality habitats managed at a scale which allow functioning natural processes. Streams, rivers, wetlands and groundwaters are naturalised, healthy, wildlife-rich and pollution-free throughout our catchments feeding into a thriving coastal and marine environment.
- Woodlands are expanded and well-managed in low-input, close-to-nature systems; many more trees are evident in the landscape, providing timber, fibre, fruit, nuts and forage, as well as carbon storage and spaces for people and nature. They are linked in the farmed landscape by a network of wide, healthy hedges.
- Climate change has stabilised by achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions in all sectors – energy, buildings, transport and land use. The landscape is resilient against climate shocks by widespread use of nature-based solutions and healthy farmed soils. There is active adaptation to coastal change for nature and people, enabling natural processes to continue.
- Good quality food is produced by resilient and sustainable farming businesses using regenerative practices having a net benefit for climate and nature. Healthy seas provide sustainable livelihoods for an inshore fishing fleet using practices that avoid habitat harm.
- Heritage assets are protected and well cared for; our cultural heritage is celebrated. It is easy to experience the time depth of this special place.
- A landscape-based, circular economy provides a range of profitable livelihoods, supporting thriving communities and enhancing the place it relies upon. Jobs in the farming, forestry, nature, heritage, visitor economy and cultural sectors are well-rewarded, well-respected and offer a wealth of opportunities for young people and new entrants. There is enough housing to meet a genuinely local need; new build includes locally grown timber and fibre.
- Everyone can easily experience, access, engage with, learn about and celebrate the area's outstanding natural beauty and special qualities and get involved in its enhancement as residents and welcomed visitors. The landscape's outstanding natural and cultural heritage inspires ongoing engagement, learning, research and artistic endeavour.
- The beautiful natural and cultural landscape underpins a high quality of public health and societal wellbeing for all.

MINISTER'S FOREWORD

Protected Landscapes are our most iconic and inspiring places. They were created from 1949, with post-war Britain recognising everyone has a right to access the countryside – from Northumberland's dark skies to the South Downs' Seven Sisters. 75 years on, the needs are greater than ever, with nature underpinning our health, economy and climate. That's why this government will empower Protected Landscapes to become greener, wilder and more accessible.

Covering 25% of England, but half of our priority habitats, Protected Landscapes are essential to nature's recovery. This government understands that we will not achieve our Environment Act targets or commitment to protect 30% of nature by 2030 without Protected Landscapes. Recovering this natural capital is essential to ensure sustainable economic growth. Protected Landscapes are fundamental to strengthening the nation's economic health by looking after the natural resources we depend on. Through nature's recovery, Protected Landscapes protect communities from flooding, fight climate change, enable sustainable food production and create green jobs. They also have a vital role in connecting diverse communities with nature - underpinning the nation's mental and physical health and reducing the strain on our NHS.

This incredible potential is beginning to be set out in the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework. However, it will only become reality through the work of Protected Landscapes teams in collaboration with local communities, land managers, public bodies and other partners.

Protected Landscape Management Plans provide the focal point for all partners to agree a local ambition and a pathway to deliver it, shaping the future of our most special places, and therefore the country. It is vital that all partners work together to develop and implement Management Plans. To support this collaboration, we have issued guidance on the Protected Landscapes duty which requires relevant authorities to seek to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes.

In recognising their importance to the nation, this government has committed to reinvigorating

Protected Landscapes with new legislation, resources and tools. I look forward to developing this with you and other partners because it is only together that we can protect and enhance these remarkable places for generations to come.

Mary Creagh CBE MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Nature & Protected Landscapes), June 2025.

Postcards from the future: bones of our land

This 2025 poem by Louisa Adjoa Parker is based on 114 postcards gathered during engagement events consulting members of the public about this plan. Respondents were invited to write about what they value about this landscape and their hopes and fears for its future.

From Dorset, 2025

i

dear ones / here we walk through seaside towns / past harbours with still, salted boats / over green-topped sandstone cliffs / hewn from solid gold / we run & ride bikes on the beach / swim in our wide, open seas / our children get to play on sand / some go to forest schools / we search for frogspawn in our ponds / find mushrooms, apples growing wild / watch birds / see clover, lindens, maples, pines / here is a place to think & breathe

ii

dear ones / our seas are filling up with plastic / we're dumping toxic waste / into our fresh water / sewage rises when it rains / our land & coast erodes each day / like ancient bones that turn to dust / seas are forever rising / glass-bright summer days are heating / it's a disappearing, littered landscape / there are too many people / too many dogs / tourists visit all year round / walk up neat gravelled paths / eat fish & chips & drink from cans or plastic cups / pick up their neon towels & leave / forget to take their waste / we wonder if they've forgotten / what nature means to us / our ancient land is not an item / to be ticked off from a list

From Dorset, in the future

Iii

dear ones / our seas rose up & flooded us / ravaged cliffs which stood majestic as they fell / our seas are roiling beasts now / a million kettles on the boil / plastic snakes through tainted water like seaweed / tendrils wrap around the gills of dying fish / clutched at our ankles / when we used to try to swim / plastic bottles bob like apples / unpaired trainers run nowhere / this stuff's forever floating & existing / never sinking to the sea bed / our water's black with sewage & pollution from the labs / unmentionables float past / like fleets of tiny boats / when it rains the stench will rise & fall along the shore / you can smell it from the town / there's nothing left / yet visitors still come & sit amongst the debris / try to catch last rays / of the dying sun

iv

dear ones / here we move through seaside towns / where water's clean & teems with life / our children splash in freshwater / or swim with turtles / in a teal-blue crystal sea / sunsets dip & kiss the beach / a pale moon rises in the sky / watched over by gold cliffs / wildflowers carpet the earth / the air's filled with the sound of birds & the hum of honey bees / plants thrive in rich soil / we've resurrected ghost ponds / watched nature bloom / buses glide across the land / like shoals of gleaming silver fish / we cycle on mycelium paths / connected like the wood-wide web

/ there's space for a few cars / which shine like beetles' wings / here everything is free / we welcome tourists with the sun / together we have learned / to tread the land more lightly

we found the old, wild selves / we yearned for / here, in this land of poetry / where we've gifted nature rights / we protect her fiercely / bones of our land are fusing together / wish you were here / with all our love

1. INTRODUCTION

The Dorset National Landscape is an area of outstanding natural beauty; a landscape of national and international significance for its natural and cultural heritage assets. It is a landscape rich in natural beauty which has been shaped by millennia of human occupation and food production. Natural beauty and landscape quality goes beyond the look of the landscape: it includes the elements which comprise the view (topography, geology, hydrology, wildlife, archaeology and other built heritage) and the cultural heritage made in response to it. This management plan sets out the legal basis and background of this landscape and articulates a policy framework for the conservation and enhancement of its natural beauty.

Now in its fifth edition, this management plan builds on previous iterations; it is for the landscape of the designated area, not for one organisation or partnership. It fulfils a legal requirement and is derived through local consensus. It sets out an approach to conserving and enhancing the National Landscape's natural beauty (which itself is further defined). It is for all people and organisations engaged in activities which have implications for the area's natural beauty, such as strategic planning, development management, land management, conservation, celebration and education.
It is the overarching document which describe the policies, landscape condition and implementation strategy, supported by the:

- Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) which describes the various landscape types and character areas of the National Landscape, their characteristic features and the landscape condition.
- Nature Recovery Plan, the strategic aims of which are embedded in the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Climate Adaptation Plan

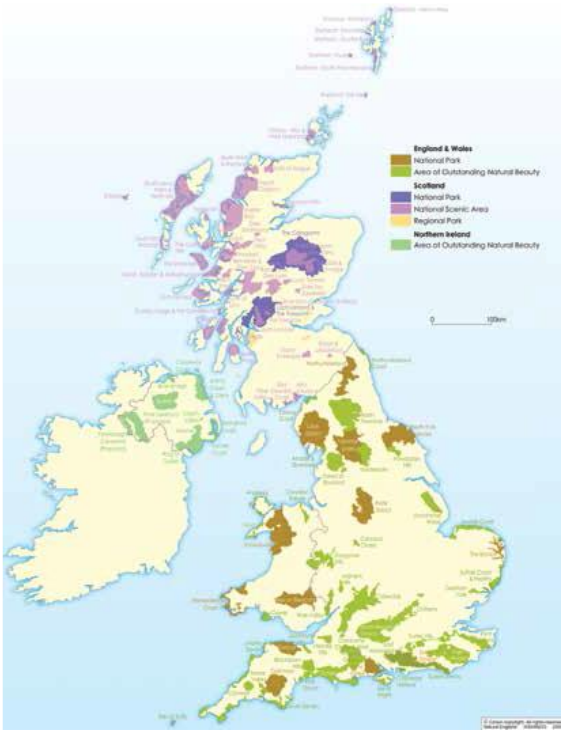
This plan has been developed and reviewed with the input and involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. Through this process, local people and organisations have provided extensive input in identifying the local actions and priorities that will conserve and enhance this nationally important landscape.

This plan has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment, an Equalities Impacts Assessment and a Habitats Regulations Assessment. Each has helped shape the policy framework and adds to its robustness.

2. NATIONAL LANDSCAPES

This chapter describes the legal background to designation, defines natural beauty, describes the geography of the Dorset National Landscape, describes how the designation and place are managed, and describes how the partnership may work beyond the boundary.

National Landscapes are areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONBs). They are nationally important protected landscapes, sharing the highest level of protection with 13 National Parks. Dorset is one of 46 National Landscapes in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. With National Parks, these make up our finest countryside and are protected in the national interest for future generations. National Landscapes are also recognised internationally by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as part of the global family of protected areas.



2.1. Purposes and Duties: the legal basis

National Landscapes are designated as areas of outstanding natural beauty under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The purposes of the National Landscape designation were updated and confirmed by the Countryside Commission in 1991 as follows:

- The primary purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.
- In pursuing the primary purpose, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.
- Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 confirmed the significance of National Landscapes and created improved arrangements for their management. There are three key sections of the Act for National Landscapes:

- Recently amended by the Levelling up & Regeneration Act 2023, Section 85 places a statutory duty on all 'relevant authorities' including a government department or public body, any statutory undertaker and any person holding public office, to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty when discharging any function affecting land in a National Landscape.
- Section 89 places a statutory duty on local planning authorities to act jointly to produce a Management Plan for each National Landscape in their administrative area.
- Section 90 describes the notification required during the National Landscape Management Plan-making process.

National Landscapes are defined as areas outside National Parks, but considered to be of such outstanding natural beauty that it is desirable to protect them. Government has confirmed that the landscape qualities of National Parks and National Landscapes are equivalent and current guidance makes it clear that the practical application of the natural beauty criterion is identical for both designations, as is their equivalent importance and protection.

2.2. Natural beauty

Natural beauty remains largely undefined in legislation, despite being central to the NPAC Act 1949. Since then, qualifications and amendments to the legislation make it clear that natural beauty includes wildlife, geological features and cultural heritage while not being restricted to them.

Government guidance relating to National Landscapes provides a useful non-technical definition: '**Natural beauty is not just the look of the landscape, but includes landform and geology, plants and animals, landscape features and the rich history of human settlement over the centuries**'. More recently the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 clarified that land used for agriculture, woodlands, parkland or with physiographical features partly the product of human intervention in the landscape, is not prevented from being treated as an area of 'natural beauty'.

Landscape beauty is not limited to the visual character but includes all aspects which underpin and contribute to that character. Landscape function and ecological integrity are important measures of landscape beauty. Therefore, nature recovery and the conservation of built and cultural heritage are central to the statutory purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Chapter 5 describes the area's special qualities in further detail; these are this area's specific elements of natural beauty.

2.3. The Dorset National Landscape

The Dorset National Landscape was designated in 1959 and is the fifth largest. It covers 1,129 square kilometres, approximately 42% of the county.

It stretches from Lyme Regis in the west, along the coast to Poole Harbour in the east, and north to Hambledon Hill near Blandford Forum. It covers over half of Poole Harbour, including Brownsea and the smaller islands. Outside of Poole Harbour and the Fleet the designated area ends at mean low water, but with a significant extent of coastline the seaward setting and adjacent marine environment is important to the National Landscape's condition. The Dorset National Landscape also includes small areas in Somerset and Devon.

The Dorset National Landscape has approximately 76,700 people living within it, 743,000 within 10km and over 2.15 million people living within 65km of the boundary. Some market and coastal towns lie within the National Landscape: Lyme Regis, Bridport, Beaminster and Swanage.

2.4. Geographic Context

The Dorset National Landscape is connected to land, ecosystems, people and business beyond its boundaries. The Dorset National Landscape lies within an area known for its outstanding environmental quality. To the east are the internationally important urban heaths around Poole and Bournemouth and the New Forest National Park. To the northeast, the Dorset National Landscape shares a boundary with the Cranborne Chase National Landscape near Blandford. To the west lie the Blackdown Hills National Landscape and the East Devon National Landscape which meets the Dorset National Landscape at Lyme Regis and includes the western section of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.

Much of the surrounding countryside in Dorset, while not being covered by landscape designations, is still of extremely high quality. To the north lies the Blackmore Vale, to the south the Isle of Portland and separating the National Landscape's northern downs from the Isle of Purbeck are the lower Frome and Piddle valleys. Significant and growing urban populations adjacent to the National Landscape at Dorchester, Weymouth, Yeovil, Taunton and the Poole-Bournemouth conurbation look to the National Landscape as an area for leisure and recreation.

As a coastal protected landscape, management of the Dorset National Landscape must also take into account its links to the marine environment. Harbour and saline lagoons lie within the boundary in Poole Harbour and the Fleet. Outside these areas the National Landscape boundary is at Mean Low Water. Activities within the marine elements of the National Landscape as well as out at sea can have significant implications for the character and qualities

of the National Landscape, and a high-quality marine environment is just as crucial to the National Landscape's integrity as a high-quality terrestrial environment.

2.5. Managing the Dorset National Landscape

Most of the Dorset National Landscape is in private ownership and actively farmed (over 70%). The Dorset National Landscape Partnership has influence over the landscape through the planning process, by offering and shaping grants and other incentives, and through guidance and advice. There are many decisions affecting the landscape over which the Partnership has no direct influence; however it seeks to improve understanding of the designation to enable better decisions to be taken.

Delivery of the Dorset National Landscape Management Plan is coordinated by the Dorset National Landscape Partnership, which brings together local authorities, statutory agencies, local community and landowner representatives (key partners are listed in chapter 8). The Partnership has a dedicated staff team which delivers a wide range of projects and advises on activities and initiatives in the National Landscape. Core activity is funded by Defra and Dorset Council as the local authority with responsibility for this National Landscape; significant additional funds are raised for Partnership projects.

The Partnership also works closely with a wide range of organisations, communities and landowners across the area, notably Activate Performing Arts, Dorset Arts Development Company, Dorset Coast Forum, Dorset Council, Dorset Food & Drink, Dorset Wildlife Trust, National Trust, Natural England, RSPB, and many others. The success of the Partnership is dependent on its close working relations with these organisations and those who farm, live and work here.

The National Landscape Partnership also works with the Dorset Health & Wellbeing Board, Dorset Local Nature Partnership, Catchment Partnerships and the Local Access Forum, raising issues and promoting opportunities afforded by the National Landscape.

2.6. Working beyond the Dorset National Landscape

The Dorset National Landscape Partnership is a member of the National Landscapes Association and Europarc, which bring together the family of protected landscapes national and European levels. Through membership of these bodies, the Dorset National Landscape Partnership develops joint initiatives, shares experience, influences policy and supports campaigns for greater recognition and protection for National Landscapes.

Many of the principles of this Management Plan can be applied to landscapes outside the National Landscape boundary. Where appropriate, the Dorset National Landscape Partnership works with partners to deliver projects across the county of Dorset rather than just within the National Landscape, ensuring that the context of the National Landscape is recognised. Many projects also operate collaboratively to make best use of available resources.

3. THIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

This chapter describes what the plan is for, who it is for, how it related to other plans and strategies and illustrates the impact of previous plans.

3.1. What is the Plan for?

This plan is for guiding and inspiring action that will bring us closer to achieving the vision. It meets the statutory requirement on local authorities to produce a Management Plan but goes beyond that requirement by:

- Bringing together partners to develop a vision and target action for this protected landscape.
- Promoting collaboration in action for best results.
- Helping to prioritise public investment, for example agri-environment or rural development grant.
- Providing a framework for private investment, for example commercial or philanthropic.
- Providing a policy framework within which the National Landscape Partnership can bring partners together to design, resource and implement programmes of action.

The plan places a focus on how the primary purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty will be delivered; social and economic issues are covered in terms of their relationship to that primary purpose.

3.2. Who is the Plan for?

The National Landscape Management Plan is just that – a plan for the National Landscape area. It provides a framework that can help guide all activities that might affect the National Landscape. Its audiences include:

- National Landscape Partnership organisations – these organisations will have a key role in delivering and championing the Management Plan.
- Relevant authorities – all public bodies, statutory undertakers and persons holding public office have a duty to seek to further the purpose of the National Landscape; this Management Plan will guide them in fulfilling their statutory duties.
- Landowners and managers – those who own and manage land in the National Landscape have a vital role to play; the plan aims to guide, support and attract resources for sensitive management of the National Landscape.
- Local communities – everyone who lives and works in the National Landscape can play an active role in caring for it; the plan identifies some of the priorities for action and ways to get involved.

3.3. How does it relate to other plans, strategies and processes?

This plan should be used to guide and inform all other plans and activities developed by public bodies and statutory undertakers that may affect the National Landscape, in line with their duty to seek to further the purpose of the designation. It should also be used for other people and organisations in and around the National Landscape so that they may contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the National Landscape.

- This plan will help promote and support local delivery of the Environment Improvement Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including a range of biodiversity, water quality and landscape initiatives.
- Public investment strategies: it can guide the targeting and prioritising of land management grants and other rural industry grants or loans.
- Local & spatial plans: it provides part of the evidence base for the Dorset Local Plan (and those in neighbouring counties) for housing and employment land, transport, waste and minerals and rights of way.

- Marine plans: provides part of the evidence base for the Marine Plan (South).
- Development management: local planning authorities and the Marine Management Organisation have a statutory duty to seek to further the purpose of the National Landscape when making planning decisions. In making these decisions the relevant authority should seek the advice of Natural England, the statutory agency responsible for National Landscapes. In addition, this Management Plan is a material consideration in the planning process. Planning authorities seek advice from the National Landscape Team under the Dorset National Landscape planning protocol.
- Health and wellbeing plans: it can guide the implementation of the nature-based preventative health measures in the NHS Change programme.
- Catchment plans: it provides part of the evidence base for the partnership catchment management plans within the National Landscape (currently the Poole Harbour and Stour Catchments Plans). It also influences River Basin Management Plans and water company investment plans.
- Community planning: it can help inform neighbourhood and parish plans and community strategies.
- The Dorset & East Devon World Heritage Site Management Plan: this plan outlines the statutory landscape protections for the site and its setting in the collective interests of all humanity.
- Cultural strategies such as Arts Council England's Let's Create strategy and the Dorset Cultural Strategy: it can add context and local distinctiveness to enhance implementation.

3.4. What have previous plans helped to achieve?

Earlier editions of the plan have underpinned the work of the Dorset National Landscape Partnership and a wide range of contributors. Over the period 2019-2025, the last management plan helped attract over £10M investment through the National Landscape Partnership alone for conservation, access, understanding and celebration activities. It also helped guide National Grid's investment of over £100M to underground the high voltage electricity lines between Winterbourne Abbas and Corton, influenced considerably further millions invested through agri-environment schemes. The following examples highlight the ways in which the National Landscape Partnership operate:

- Development management and planning gain: the policies and detail within the plan has helped limit harmful development within the National Landscape and enabled a framework for mitigation and compensation where residual significant impacts remain at the approval of certain proposals. During the plan period the £1.7M Wytch Farm Landscape Enhancement Fund was fully committed to projects enhancing landscape character and non-car access; further compensatory funds were secured for impacts around Swanworth Quarry and two large solar developments outside the National Landscape near Owermoigne.

- The Wild Purbeck Partnership continued after the initial project delivery role, convening partners to plan and coordinate better management for nature. Arising from this partnership in 2020 was the country's first 'super' National Nature Reserve, the Purbeck Heaths of 3,331 hectares under the ownership of seven different landowners, encompassing one of lowland England's wildest landscapes. A National Landscape-led bid for Green Recovery Challenge Funds enabled the development of the Wilder Grazing Unit, an unfenced area of 1370 hectares in which cattle, ponies, pigs and wild deer graze together.
  In West Dorset, the National Landscape team convenes partners to deliver water quality enhancements in the West Dorset Rivers and Coastal Streams catchment, pioneering a

community-led approach. The partnership was instrumental in securing Environment Agency funding for a programme of Natural Flood Management implementation and monitoring and working with West Dorset Wilding and others to coordinate efforts of citizen scientists.

- Supported by the Community Lottery programme, Stepping into Nature continued into a second 3-year programme providing nature connectedness for older people, those living with dementia and their carers. The partnership included many landowning environmental organisations who increased their engagement and provision for older people, and was part of a wider collaboration on health with the Dorset Local Nature Partnership. It has now evolved into Nature Buddies, developing a volunteer base to assist people with long-term health conditions to experience greater connection to their local environments.
  The Dorset National Landscape team also led the FLAVOURS project partnership delivering a programme of landscape and food-based experiences for minority ethnic and refugee groups, building relationships and informing a joint ambition for co-creating further similar activities.

- The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL) programme was co-designed with government, in recognition of Protected Landscapes organisations' role as trusted honest brokers. In Dorset, over the programme's first 4 years to March 2025 nearly £2.7M was redistributed achieving outcomes for people, nature, climate and place, cementing the National Landscape team's role in securing good results by enabling farmer-led innovation. The programme has reached around a quarter of the landscape's farm businesses over roughly a quarter of the area.
  Alongside FIPL, government also provided funding of £250,374 via the Access for All programme (3 years to March 2025), enabling a broader range of people to access the landscape through infrastructure improvements.

- While there are several examples of national collaborative work through the National Landscapes Association, Nature Calling is an excellent recent example. Arts Council England funds were secured nationally, which enabled 8 hub landscapes (of which Dorset National Landscape was one) to undertake two creative commissions to engage with underserved communities and share the learning and expertise with neighbouring protected landscapes. Dorset National Landscape engaged producers Activate Performing Arts and Louisa Adjoa Parker who created the written piece This Land, reflecting on landscape and belonging after undertaking a series of interviews. Arts collective Radical Ritual were also engaged to produce the artwork Consequences – a giant game of consequences, inspired by the Cerne Abbas Giant, co-designing it with 200 people from the Yeovil area in the process.

- In addition, many community projects delivering aspects of the plan were encouraged and supported through the provision of small grants. Enabling community-led creativity in plan delivery is an important principle.

4. THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

This chapter describes the national and international political, environmental and socio-economic background, all forces for landscape change.

The Dorset National Landscape, its management and access to it as guided by this plan can provide solutions to the many challenges listed below. Landscape as a framework for action can enable positive partnership working between agencies, owners, occupiers and local communities.

4.1. Political

4.1.1. National policy

Since the production of the last plan, the Environment Act (2021) received Royal Assent. Key aspects within it include:

- Environmental Improvement Plan, (EIP) building on the 25 Year Environment Plan. The Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework requires reporting on progress towards 3 key Environmental Improvement Plan goals (1: thriving plants and wildlife; 7: mitigating and adapting to climate change and 10: enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment). It also includes goals for increasing the area of nature-friendly farming and increasing private investment in nature recovery. The EIP is, at the time of writing, subject to a rapid review.
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS): at the time of writing the Dorset LNRS has been adopted. This covers the vast majority of the Dorset National Landscape and builds on previous mapping work led by the National Landscape team.

Net Zero Strategy

- The UK is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 100% compared to 1990 levels by 2050. A legally binding target was set by an amendment to the Climate Change Act 2008.

At the time of writing, the Government has also committed to developing two strategies that will affect decisions about land in National Landscapes:

- A Land Use Framework, which is intended to aid planning for development, food security and nature recovery. Government is considering public consultation responses.
- A National Food Strategy, intended to focus on food security, health, environment and economy.

Planning and development policy is also shifting with local authorities being required to provide for a much greater housing supply in Local Plans. Nutrient rules for catchments draining into protected sites (Poole Harbour, the Axe and the Fleet) still require the nutrient contribution from new housing in the catchment to be offset by taking land out of intensive agriculture. A Planning and Infrastructure Bill is before parliament at the time of writing.

The health system is also changing with clustering becoming more regionalised (and less local) and the NHS Change Programme is also under way, seeking to develop a 10-year Health Plan. Opportunities for preventative measures through nature connection are as relevant as ever.

4.1.2. Devolution

There is a drive to create sub-regional mayoral authorities. It is expected that some environmental activities would be coordinated at this scale. Dorset entered a bid with Wiltshire and Somerset in 2025 that wasn't accepted into the priority programme. There remains the political will, and it may progress during the lifespan of this management plan.

4.1.3. Public finances

Public funding is limited, with the economy still suffering from the shocks of Brexit, the global pandemic and war in Ukraine. Departmental budgets are constrained, and successive short-term spending reviews have hampered long-term planning. Funds for achieving environmental outcomes are at threat of being diverted to other parts of the national budget.
At the time of writing, Government spending reviews have limited revenue funding for National Landscapes while continuing to provide sums of capital funding. This reduces time and resources available for developing broad programmes of work.
Local authority funding is at a severe low ebb, with rising demands from adult and social care causing the need to look for savings elsewhere.

4.2. Environmental

4.2.1. Nature and climate emergency

These conjoined emergencies are widely accepted. Driven by numerous factors globally, most notably fossil fuel combustion and land conversion, loss of biodiversity and natural abundance affects, and is affected by the changing climate. Even with stabilised emissions, the average global temperature is forecast to rise to a point at which extreme weather events, storminess, flooding and sea level rise are almost certain.
Disruption to nature, through habitat destruction, pollution, pests and diseases, and exploitation is causing a rapid rate of change; extinctions and genetic bottlenecks result, threatening the resilience of our future. Heritage assets are also increasingly at risk from climate change, with soil loss affecting below ground archaeology and gales and water ingress affecting historic buildings.
The future impacts will manifest themselves on a country that is already one of the most nature-depleted in the world, leading quickly to irreversible loss.

4.2.2. Catchment issues

Intrinsic to the nature emergency, the National Landscape's water resources are subject to significant nutrient loading from agriculture and sewage, both current and historical (especially the Poole Harbour catchment, River Axe catchment, The Fleet catchment). A significant challenge facing the rivers, streams and tidal water within the National Landscape and its marine setting relates to the impact of nutrients and eutrophication. In addition, many rivers and streams are highly modified in order to encourage faster drainage.
The increase in forecast intensive rainfall events, combined with inappropriate land use choices, will lead to increased turbidity of rivers and streams as well as increased flood risk, putting people at greater risk.

4.3. Socio-economic

4.3.1. Land-based economy

Through the Agricultural Transition, basic payments for supporting agricultural operations are due to be phased out completely by 2028. The food system which drives many farm decisions is dysfunctional: farmers struggle to set a price for their products in the face of the massive bargaining power of the small number of major retailers; English farm incomes hit a significant low in 23-24, particularly lowland mixed grazing (latest statistics at time of writing). At the same time, the system encourages the continued production of commodity crops (cereals, meat, eggs, and milk) in which the UK tends to be more self-sufficient while returns for market gardening are very low, even though these are the categories in which the UK is least self-sufficient. This has dietary and environmental consequences.

Regenerative forms of agriculture present a huge opportunity by increasing the circularity of each farm's economy, reducing reliance on external inputs of fuel, fertiliser and pesticide. Additionally, this focus on soil health during food production appears to increase that food's nutrient density.
There are wider opportunities to describe and develop a new nature-based local economy that is circular rather than extractive, contributing to and feeding from a high quality natural environment.

4.3.2. Green finance

It is widely quoted that restoring the UK's natural wealth requires at least £44 billion over the next decade, needing both public and private finance. Currently, private investment is minimal, with only £95 million per year. The government is committed to increasing the flow of private finance into nature restoration; at the time of writing a peatland and woodland code exist for the transparent trading of carbon benefits. The remaining potential markets are underdeveloped and have no accepted framework to underwrite trading.
Green finance can take various forms. Offsetting is where environmental damage in one area is offset by investment in restoration in another. Risk reduction is where a private asset may be protected by investment in nature-based solutions, for instance where the owner of an industrial site in low-lying land may invest in slowing the flow of water through the catchment to reduce the likelihood of flooding. Environmental and social governance investment is frequently done to maintain (or enhance) an enterprise's good environmental reputation. Looking ahead, it is likely that enterprises will be required to make disclosures about their impact on nature and climate, and statements on what they are doing to mitigate it as part of their annual reporting, through the Taskforce for Climate/Nature-based Financial Disclosures. Philanthropic funding is also a possibility.

4.3.3. Equality, diversity and inclusion

The Equality Act (2010) has underpinned a movement towards greater levels of equality, although many parts of society still experience discrimination. Historically underserved communities in the Dorset National Landscape are minority ethnic and refugee communities, young people and those on low incomes. In addition, it is recognised that additional efforts need to be made by the partnership to include people living with long-term health conditions and their carers, and those experiencing rural isolation.
The Landscapes Review (2019) highlighted the real and perceived barriers to accessing the countryside faced by many people, particularly those from the global majority, disabled and/or with low incomes. The review also remarked upon the lack of diversity in the land management sector and in the governance of protected landscapes.
A lack of diversity in audiences engaged in protected landscapes limits national representation in these national assets, the potential supporter base, and risks creating a culture of exclusivity.

4.3.4. Housing affordability

According to the National Housing Federation, the average house price in Dorset increased to £331,426 in 2025, which is around 10 times the average salary. Many young people and those on wages associated with land management are being effectively priced out of the countryside. Alongside this, there is a shortage of truly affordable and social housing. This national trend is exacerbated by Dorset's desirability as a retirement, second home and holiday destination.

4.3.5. Health and wellbeing crisis

2021 Census data show 29.6% of the Dorset population is aged 65+ compared to a national figure of 18.6%. Dorset has a significantly older population than the national average, continuing a trend of recent decades. This growing number of older people will increase demand for health

and social care services, leading to more family members finding themselves acting as informal carers.
Alongside the growing population, the Dorset Local Nature Partnership recognise a wider health and wellbeing crisis: exacerbated by the global coronavirus pandemic, we are witnessing increases in diet-related illnesses (e.g. diabetes) and a surge of mental health issues. Exercise rates are low, engagement with nature is poor and health inequalities remain.

4.3.6. Environmental awareness

There continues to be a growth in environmental awareness. Climate change awareness, health interests and concern for animal rights is seeing a dietary shift away from red meat, although dairy consumption remains relatively stable. There is a growth in interest in not only local food, but food that is not associated with environmental harms. Hundreds of people have participated in curated Food Conversations in Dorset, the outputs of which will feed into the national Food Strategy. The Feeding Dorset Partnership has joined the county to the Sustainable Food Places programme; Bridport is the county's first Sustainable Food town.
There is a sustained demand for renewable energy, and many people are trying to reduce their consumption of, and reliance on fossil fuels. Awareness of the nature and climate emergency is particularly wide among young people, many of whom suffer from climate anxiety.
Community-based environmental organisations such as Planet Purbeck and the Dorset Climate Action Network are well-subscribed and are effective at mobilising their community audience.
However, alongside these trends, there has been increased polarisation in attitudes towards climate change, environment, food security, equality and other related socio-environmental factors.

5. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This chapter is largely derived from other official sources. It describes the elements of natural beauty that are important to this landscape.

National Landscapes are designated for their outstanding natural beauty. Natural beauty goes beyond the visual appearance of the landscape, including flora, fauna, geological and physiographical features, manmade, historic and cultural associations and our sensory perceptions of it. The combination of these factors in each area gives a unique sense of place and helps underpin our quality of life.
The natural beauty of this National Landscape is described in a suite of special qualities or properties that together make it unique and outstanding, underpinning its designation as a nationally important protected landscape. These are the elements we need to conserve and enhance for the future and they should be considered in all decisions affecting the National Landscape. This Statement of Significance is based on the 1993 Assessment of the Dorset National Landscape produced by the Countryside Commission. The special qualities of the Dorset National Landscape are:

5.1. Contrast and diversity – a microcosm of England's finest landscapes…

The National Landscape is much more than one fine landscape – it is a collection of fine landscapes, each with its own characteristics and sense of place, including different landforms, soils and wildlife habitats. Contrasting and complex geology gives rise to the chalk downland, limestone country, heathlands, greensand ridges and clay vales that occur in the Dorset National Landscape; they are often closely juxtaposed to create striking sequences of beautiful countryside that are unique in Britain. The transitions between the component landscapes of the mosaic are often particularly attractive, with strong contrasts in some areas and a gentle transition of character in others.
The ridge tops and chalk escarpments add an extra dimension to the Dorset National Landscape by providing stark contrasts of landform that serve to increase and emphasise its diversity. These areas of higher ground also allow the observer uninterrupted panoramic views to appreciate the complex pattern and textures of the surrounding landscapes.
Nowhere is the contrast and diversity of this rich assemblage of landscapes more graphically illustrated than in the Isle of Purbeck. Here, many of the characteristic landscapes of the Dorset National Landscape are represented on a miniature scale to create scenery of spectacular beauty and contrasts, which mirrors that of the whole area.
Within this overall context, there are numerous individual landmarks, such as hilltop earthworks, monuments and tree clumps that help to contribute an individuality and sense of place at a local scale.
In addition to its outstanding scenic qualities, the National Landscape retains a sense of tranquillity and remoteness that is an integral part of these landscapes. It retains dark night skies and an undeveloped rural character. The National Landscape's Landscape Character Assessment, 'Conserving Character', adds further understanding of the contrast and diversity of the area's landscapes and their management requirements.

5.1.1. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The area's diverse landform and striking changes in topography are dictated by the National Landscape's varied geology, upon which subsequent erosion has occurred. This 'land-shape' has then been inhabited, built upon and in some places modified by several thousand years of

population. It is important to note that the landscape continues to be dynamic, with many active natural processes sustaining natural beauty.

Landscape and natural beauty

Landscape is a framework which encompasses geological, hydrological, biological, and historical qualities, as perceived by people thereby influenced by cultural and social factors. The Dorset National Landscape's Landscape Character Assessment describes these features and qualities in more detail, by subdividing the area into character types and character areas.
Running throughout each character area are qualities that make the National Landscape inspiring and special, such as the sense of tranquillity and remoteness and sweeping views across diverse landscapes. The variety of landscape types found within the area is a defining feature of the National Landscape underpinned by diverse geology, with dramatic changes from high chalk and greensand ridges to low undulating vales or open heaths. It is often the transition from one landscape type to another that creates drama and scenic quality. At the local level, individual landmark features and boundaries add to character.
Under this aspect of the National Landscape's special qualities and natural beauty, however, the main consideration is for the characteristics and qualities of the landscape, such as the undeveloped rural character, tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies and panoramic views. Through the main modes of interaction with the place, this plan considers some of the broad issues that can affect them. Landscape character and condition are more fully described in Chapter 6.

5.2. Wildlife of national and international significance…

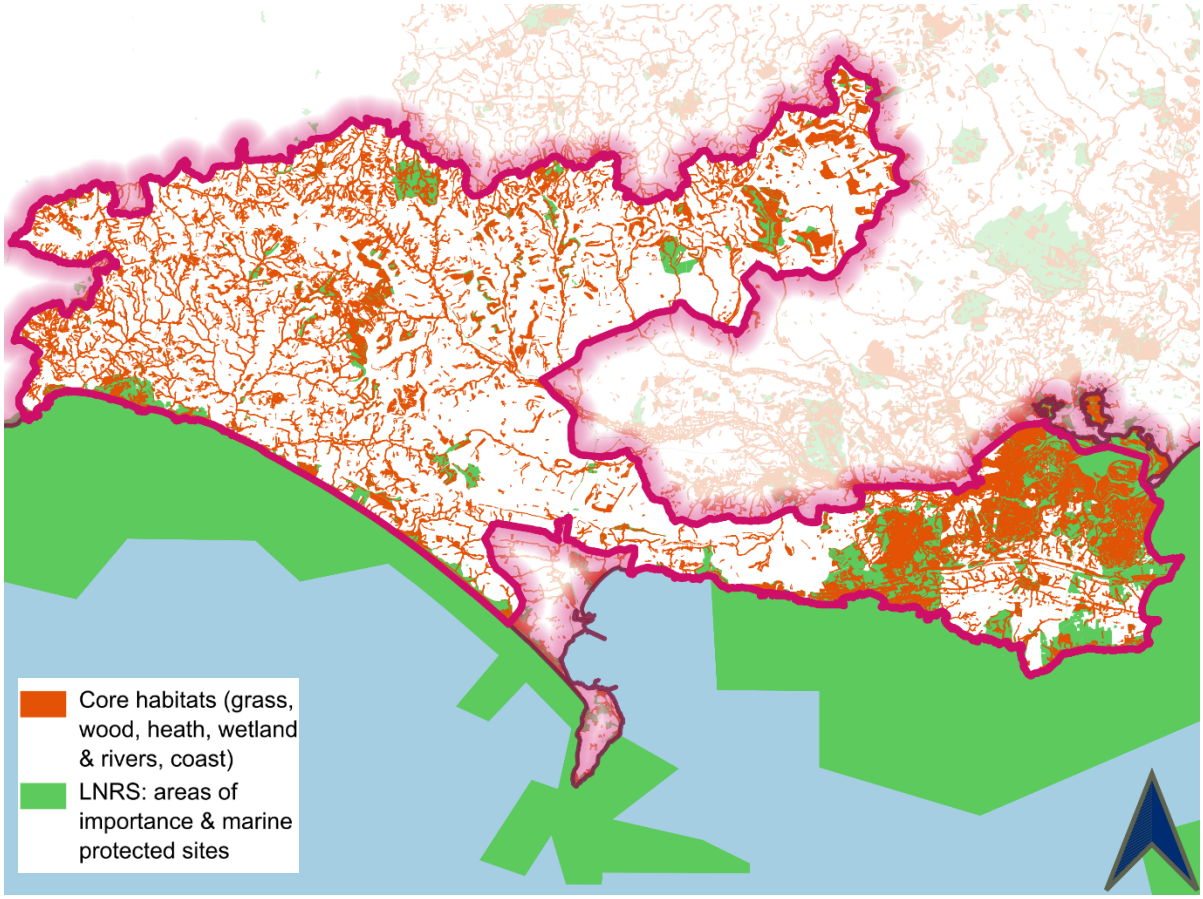
The contrast and diversity of the National Landscape is reflected in its wildlife. The range of habitats and associated species is unusually rich, including 83% of all British mammal species, 48% of bird species and 70% of butterfly species. The UK's richest grid squares for vascular plants and mammals are both found in the Dorset National Landscape. The National Landscape's southern location and relatively warm climate make it hospitable to many species unable to survive further north and home to species new to Britain, naturally expanding their ranges with the changing climate. The National Landscape includes many areas of international significance, including Poole Harbour and the Fleet which are key sites for breeding and overwintering birds, lowland heath areas in the east, calcareous grasslands in the Cerne and Sydling Valleys and Purbeck Coast, ancient woodlands at Bracketts Coppice and the West Dorset alder woods, and important cliff and maritime habitats along significant sections of the coast. Two marine SACs are adjacent to significant lengths of the National Landscape's coastline; there are two candidate marine SPAs and three Marine Conservation zones adjacent to the National Landscape boundary. Further coastal and marine areas are proposed for protection.
Many other areas are important at the national level and are supported by a large number of locally significant sites.
The quality of the wider National Landscape offers high potential to rebuild extensive mosaics of wildlife habitat and to improve the linkages between them.

5.2.1. BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants, and the natural systems that support them. Biodiversity matters because it supports the vital services we get from the natural environment. It contributes to our economy, our health and wellbeing and it enriches our lives. Dorset has an exceptional wealth of biodiversity and this plan addresses the issues and opportunities for the species, habitats and natural systems in the Dorset National Landscape. There has been a long history of partnership working to deliver biodiversity conservation in the county, and this plan seeks to complement this.

Biodiversity and natural beauty

Biodiversity is a fundamental element of natural beauty. The National Landscape's wealth of wildlife, from the common and widespread to the globally rare, is one of the outstanding qualities that underpin its designation. The biodiversity of the National Landscape is shaped by the underlying geology and its influence on soils and hydrology. It is also influenced by the social, cultural and economic activities of past and present land use, which biodiversity supports by providing resources such as food, timber, clean water and crop pollination amongst others. Biodiversity also provides us with opportunities for recreation, relaxation and inspiration and a range of associated tourism opportunities. Dorset is particularly rich in some habitats and species. For example, lowland heathland and the characteristic species associated with it form a recognisable landscape across southern England, but in Dorset there is a concentration of species such as sand lizards and smooth snakes that do not occur in such numbers anywhere else in the country. The same could be said of the coastal habitats of Poole Harbour and the Fleet within the boundary and the marine SACs on its southern boundary. Since 1945, the landscape has changed markedly in response to changes in economic, agricultural and forestry policies. For example, some of our most cherished wildlife areas have become degraded over time through habitat loss and fragmentation associated with agricultural intensification, conifer afforestation and increasing development pressures. Also, increased use of artificial fertilizers as a result of the drive for food self-sufficiency that followed the Second World War has led to nutrient enrichment of many watercourses, leading to additional impacts on wildlife, particularly in Poole Harbour and the Fleet. Current and future pressures and competing land uses will continue to have impacts, including agricultural policy, climate change, invasive species (new pests and diseases). A step-change in our approach to nature conservation is required to ensure that natural systems are repaired and rebuilt, creating a more resilient natural environment for the benefit of wildlife and ourselves. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy will guide this step change, in conjunction with local data on functioning ecological networks and habitat restoration opportunities.



Map 1 Environmental assets

Description of the resource

The Dorset National Landscape encompasses a breadth of biodiversity – chalk and limestone grassland which is found across the National Landscape and along the coast; lowland heathland concentrated in the eastern part of the National Landscape; ancient meadows and woodlands scattered throughout; the coastal habitats of Poole Harbour and the Fleet; and maritime coast and cliff along much of the Jurassic Coast. This is reflected through a number of nature conservation designations:

- Three Ramsar Sites; wetlands of global importance: Chesil Beach and the Fleet, Poole Harbour, and Dorset Heathlands. In total they cover 5.1% of the National Landscape.
- Thirteen Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) of international importance for habitats and species within or directly adjacent: Bracket's Coppice; Cerne and Sydling Downs; Chesil and the Fleet; Crookhill Brick Pit; Dorset Heaths; Dorset Heaths (Purbeck and Wareham) and Studland Dunes; Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs; Lyme Bay and Torbay; River Axe; Sidmouth to West Bay; St. Aldhelm's Head to Durlston Head; Studland to Portland; and West Dorset Alder Woods. In total they cover 5.8% of the National Landscape.
- Four Special Protection Areas (SPAs) of international importance for birds: Chesil Beach and the Fleet; Dorset Heathlands; Poole Harbour; and Solant and Dorset Coast. In total they cover 6.2% of the National Landscape. Together, SACs and SPAs form a network of 'Natura 2000' sites - European sites of the highest value for rare, endangered or vulnerable habitats and species.
- Three Marine Conservation Zones, protected for nationally important marine wildlife, habitats, geology, and geomorphology: Studland Bay; Purbeck Coast; and Chesil Beach and Stennis Ledges.

- Ten National Nature Reserves (NNRs) lie wholly or partly within the National Landscape: Arne Reedbeds; Axemouth to Lyme Regis Undercliffs; Durlston; Hambledon Hill; Hog Cliff; Holton Heath; Horn Park Quarry; Kingcombe; Purbeck Heaths; and Valley of the Stones. In total they cover 3.6% of the National Landscape.
- 75 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), of national importance for their wildlife and/or geological interest, which cover 10.9% of the National Landscape.
- 679 Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs), which cover 5.8% of the National Landscape.
- 1,581 hectares of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and 1,485 hectares of Plantation on Ancient Woodland. Combined they cover 3,066 hectares and 2.7% of the National Landscape.
- Seven Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) covering less than 1% of the National Landscape. These are for people and wildlife, their designation reflecting the special value of wildlife and greenspaces to a local community: Asker's Meadow; Bothenhampton; Crookhill Brickpit; Hilfield Hill; Jellyfields; Peveril Point and the Downs; and Woolland Hill

The National Landscape includes 25 of the 65 England Priority Terrestrial and Maritime Habitats, along with 281 of the 639 Priority Species, including early gentian, southern damselfly, Bechstein's bat, marsh fritillary, sand lizard and nightjar. The majority of the land-based habitats are under agricultural or forestry management and in private ownership.

Much of the biodiversity is linked to a range of habitats across the National Landscape, which, whilst previously much more extensive, remain as a core of high biodiversity and the basis of a functioning ecological network. Strengthening the network will enable the landscape to tolerate environmental change and will also greatly contribute to the aesthetic quality. Hedges, stone walls, streams, ancient trees, copses, rough grassland, scrub, small quarries, ponds, fallow fields and uncultivated margins; all these are valuable assets to the National Landscape's biodiversity, landscape character and cultural heritage.

5.3. A living textbook and historical record of rural England…

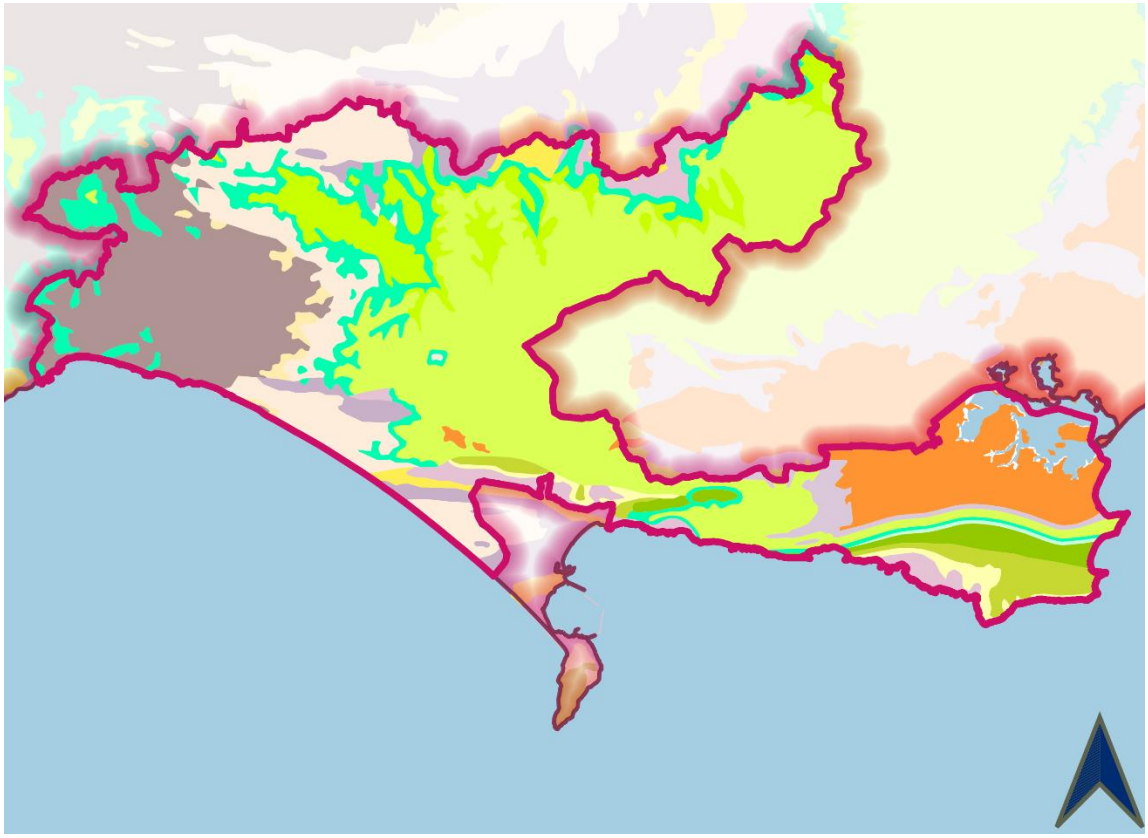
The Dorset National Landscape boasts an unrivalled expression of the interaction of geology, human influence and natural processes in the landscape.
In particular, the Dorset National Landscape has an exceptional undeveloped coastline, renowned for its spectacular scenery, geological and ecological interest and unique coastal features including Chesil Beach and the Fleet Lagoon, Lulworth Cove and the Fossil Forest, Durdle Door and Old Harry Rocks. The unique sequential nature of the rock formations along the Dorset and East Devon's Jurassic Coast tells the story of 185 million years of earth history. The dynamic nature of the coast means that it is constantly changing and new geological discoveries are constantly being made, emphasising the importance of natural coastal processes. The significance and value of the geological time sequence and the active coastal processes are reflected in the designation of the coast as a World Heritage Site.
With relatively little large-scale development, the Dorset National Landscape retains a strong sense of continuity with the past, supporting a rich historic and built heritage. This is expressed throughout the landscape, as generations have successively shaped the area. It can be seen in field and settlement patterns and their associated hedges, banks and stone walls, the wealth of listed historic buildings and the multitude of archaeological sites and features. The South Dorset Ridgeway is a fine example of this, with a concentration of prehistoric barrows and henges to rival that at Stonehenge and Avebury giving a focus to this ancient landscape.

Industrial activity has also left its mark. Examples of our industrial heritage include traditional stone quarrying in Purbeck, and the thousand-year-old rope industry around Bridport which have shaped the landscape, local architecture and town design.

5.3.1. GEODIVERSITY

Geodiversity can be defined as the variety of geological processes that make and move those landscapes, rocks, minerals, fossils and soils which provide the framework for life on Earth. The geology of the Dorset National Landscape spans some 200 million years of Earth history. Much of West Dorset is formed from Jurassic sediments that record changing marine conditions and contain an exceptional fossil record. Cretaceous chalk and sands lie across the central swathe of the National Landscape covering the Jurassic beds. In the east more recent deposits from the Cenozoic – sands, gravels and clays – overlie the Cretaceous rocks, giving rise to important heathland habitats. In addition to the geology and fossils, the Dorset coast is renowned for its geomorphology and active erosion processes. Key sites and features include Chesil Beach, one of the world's finest barrier beaches; West Dorset's coastal landslides; Horn Park Quarry National Nature Reserve; the fossil forest and dinosaur footprints in Purbeck and the Weymouth anticline and the Purbeck monocline structures. Significant collections at Dorset County Museum, Etches Collection Museum, Lyme Regis Museum and the Charmouth Heritage Centre enable access and understanding.

Many of the rocks and mineral resources are important for the extraction industries; the variety of building stones found in the National Landscape is a major contributor to the local distinctiveness of our settlements.

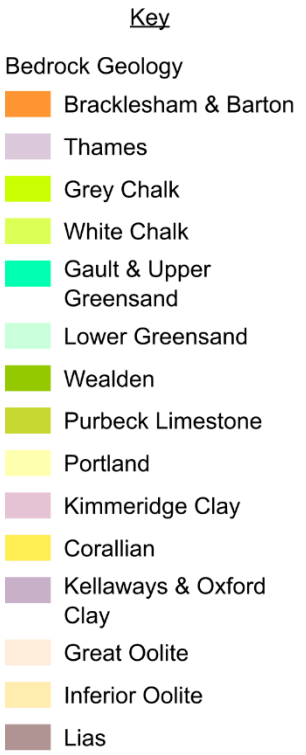


Map 2 solid geology

Geodiversity and natural beauty

Geodiversity underpins the natural beauty for which the National Landscape is designated. The diverse underlying geology and geological/ geomorphological (i.e. landform-related) processes are intrinsic to ecosystem service delivery, influencing soils and hydrology, wildlife habitats, landform, land use and architecture that make up the character and distinctiveness of the landscape. Dorset has an extremely rich geodiversity, most notably recognised through the designation of the coast as part of England's first natural World Heritage Site (WHS). The Dorset and East Devon Coast WHS was selected for its unique exposure of a sequential record through Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods; this diversity is reflected throughout the Dorset National Landscape. The network of inland geological and geomorphological sites represents a valuable but less well-known scientific record of the geology and environmental history of the area and often link to the local stone industry.

Geodiversity contributes to the cultural life of the National Landscape: the Jurassic Coast is a key part of the National Landscape's 'living textbook' special quality, and the qualities of stone for building have long influenced the area's villages, towns and field boundaries.



5.3.2. COAST & SEA

The National Landscape includes approximately 120 miles of coastline, much of which is covered by nature conservation designations. Key marine habitats in the National Landscape are at Chesil Beach and the Fleet, which is the UK's largest tidal lagoon and a marine Special Area of Conservation (SAC); Poole Harbour, the UK's largest lowland natural harbour and a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds; the coast in Purbeck, which is protected as an SPA for its internationally important tern populations; the subtidal rocky reefs adjacent to the coast between Swanage and Portland, and along the Lyme Bay coast, both of which have been designated as Marine SACs; and Kimmeridge where there is a voluntary marine reserve. s. Many important wildlife species depend on both marine and terrestrial habitats for their survival, emphasising the need for integrated management.

Being a coastal National Landscape, Dorset also supports a range of maritime industries and a rich coastal and marine heritage. The main ports along the coast are at Poole and Portland, both just outside the National Landscape boundary. Fishing harbours and anchorages that support the inshore fishing community are located at Lyme, West Bay, Weymouth, Lulworth, Kimmeridge and Chapman's Pool. Coastal resorts provide a link between land and sea where people live, come to visit and carry out the increasing trend of water-based recreation. The South West Coast Path National Trail and King Charles III England Coast Path are significant recreational resources.

The National Landscape's coastline also has significant marine archaeology (see 5.3.3).

Coast, sea and natural beauty

There are unique qualities and challenges associated with the coast and marine environments and activities both within and integrally linked to the Dorset National Landscape. While there is considerable cross over with other special qualities in relation to wildlife, geodiversity, heritage, access and local products, the nature of the National Landscape's coast merits a specific consideration.

The coast and marine environments of the National Landscape are among its most popular and defining characteristics. Our unique World Heritage Site is globally significant, but also one of the most dynamic and changing parts of the National Landscape. Over half of Poole Harbour lies within the National Landscape boundary and habitats along the coast are particularly special due to the maritime influence.
Much of the coastline is within the Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site; the National Landscape designation provides the statutory landscape protection for its setting and presentation. There are also two Heritage Coasts within the National Landscape – West Dorset and Purbeck. Heritage Coasts are stretches of largely undeveloped coastline of exceptional or very good scenic quality. While not a statutory designation, they are a material consideration in planning terms and are defined with the aim of protecting their special qualities from development and other pressures. Their statutory protection is delivered through the National Landscape designation where they overlap.

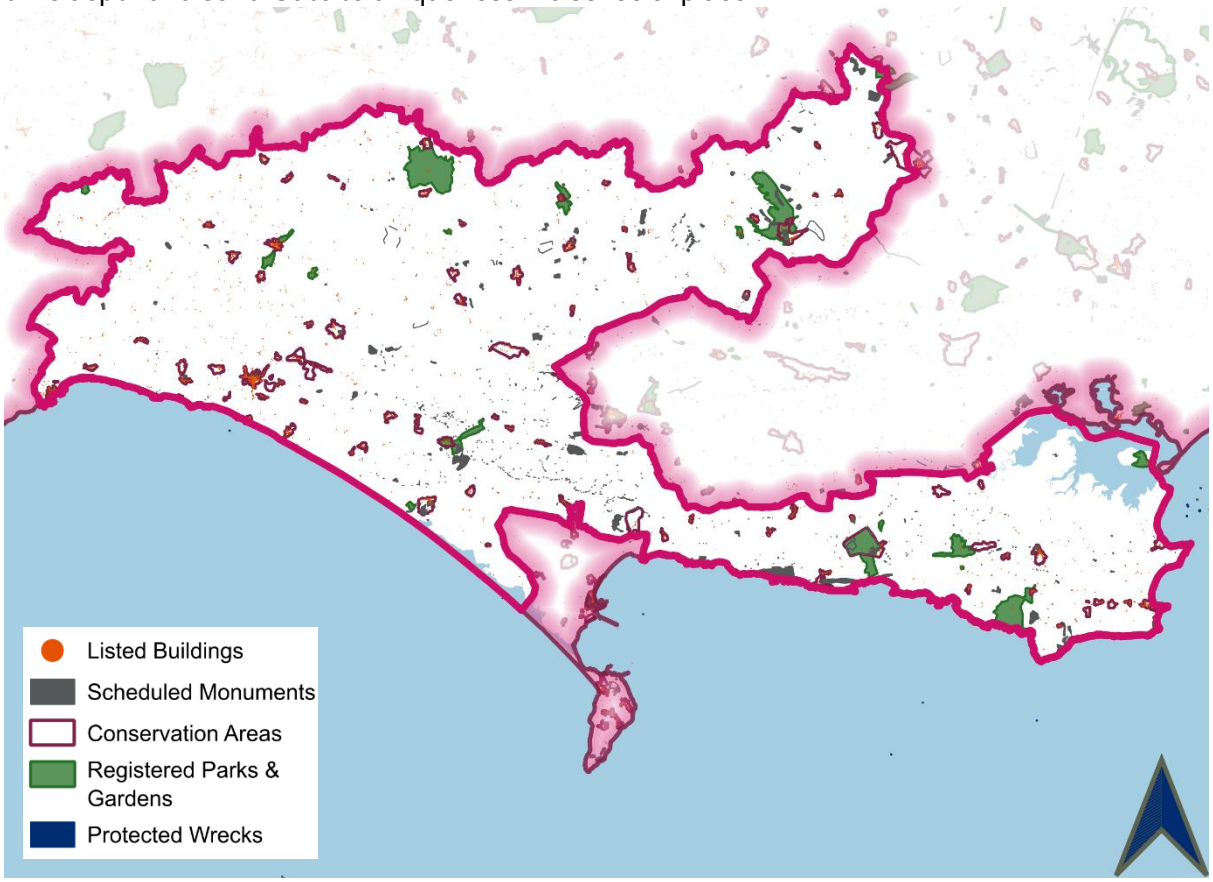
5.3.3. HISTORIC & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Dorset National Landscape has an exceptional wealth of heritage, in particular nationally important prehistoric features that reveal the evolution of the landscape and human history during this period. Its transport, settlement patterns and administrative boundaries have Roman and Saxon origins and its villages and hamlets contain fine historic churches and houses. Underpinned by a complex and diverse geology, the National Landscape contains a wealth of traditional building materials that have helped develop a unique sense of place and time depth to our villages and towns. The settlement patterns are constrained by the surrounding landscape and, along with a range of rural industries such as coppicing and water meadows, have further strengthened the sense of place.
The Dorset National Landscape boasts some of the finest visible archaeological remains in the country, such as Maiden Castle and the extensive Neolithic / Bronze Age ceremonial landscape of the South Dorset Ridgeway. Significant features span all ages, from the Neolithic to the present day, and are visible in the National Landscape's landscape; there is even some evidence of earlier human activity.
The Dorset National Landscape has 542 Scheduled Monuments totalling over 1,150 ha. Also within the National Landscape are 19 registered parks and gardens covering over 2,500 ha (1 Grade I, 9 Grade II*, 9 Grade II), 17 locally important parks and gardens, 89 conservation areas, and 4,009 listed buildings (114 Grade I, 223 Grade II*, 3,672 Grade II).
The Dorset National Landscape also has one of the highest proportions of listed buildings in the country, many of which are thatched, lending a local distinctiveness to most of its settlements. Offshore, there are over 1,700 reported shipwrecks between Lyme Regis and the mouth of Poole Harbour, 270 of which have been located on the seabed. Of these, seven are protected wrecks (of only 57 such sites in English waters) and there are six sites designated under the Protection of Military Remains Act (of only 54 such sites in British waters). Archaeology is under-recorded in the National Landscape, both for specific features, such as historic agricultural buildings and rural industries, and geographically, such as the vales in the west of the area. Woodland archaeology is also under-recorded, both in terms of archaeology beneath woodlands which is hard to survey and archaeology relating to past woodland management, such as sawpits and wood banks.
Significant archaeological collections at the Dorset Museum & Art Gallery, Wareham and Bridport Museums enable access and understanding. In addition, Poole and Portland museums house important maritime collections.

Historic and built environment and natural beauty

The marks of human occupation are integral components of the 'natural' landscape; a record of how people have used the environment and the resources it provides over time. Alongside

giving an insight into the lives of previous occupiers of the landscape, they provide a sense of time depth and contribute to uniqueness in a sense of place.



Map 3 built heritage assets

5.4. A rich legacy of cultural associations…

Over the centuries, Dorset's landscapes have inspired poets, authors, scientists and artists, many of whom have left a rich legacy of cultural associations. The best known of these is Thomas Hardy whose wonderfully evocative descriptions bring an extra dimension and depth of understanding to our appreciation of the Dorset landscape. Other literary figures inspired by Dorset's landscapes include William Barnes, Jane Austen, John Fowles and Kenneth Allsop. Turner, Constable and Paul Nash are just a few of the many artists associated with Dorset, while Gustav Holst captured the character of the Dorset heathlands in his work 'Egdon Heath'. Such cultural associations past, present and future, offer a source of inspiration to us all and may help develop new ways of understanding and managing the National Landscape.

5.4.1. CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Dorset National Landscape's landscape quality has inspired numerous renowned visual artists who lived or visited the area in the past. It was in the 19th century with new connections by rail that Dorset began to attract a wealth of artistic talent with JMW Turner and John Constable visiting. Into the 20th century Paul Nash and members of the Bloomsbury group were amongst those producing an abundance of work during this time. There remains a strong body of visual art representing the landscape; the distinctive topography and structure of the landscape unifying very diverse styles of representation as it did with past artists.
There is also a rich heritage of writing inspired by the landscape. Perhaps the best known is the work of Thomas Hardy, who embedded the landscape deeply in his work not only depicting its qualities but also how it shaped the lives of people who lived here. Reverend William Barnes also

captured the essence of the Dorset landscape and dialect in his works, as well as the traditions of rural life; the musician PJ Harvey has more recently produced land-related work in the Dorset dialect. Other writers include Jane Austin, Daniel Defoe, John Fowles and Kenneth Allsop. The writing of Sylvia Townsend Warner and Valentine Ackland was rooted in the Dorset landscape and offers spectacular insights into LGBTQ+ lives from the 1920s to the 1970s.
There is a significant literature collection at Dorset Museum & Art Gallery.
Musical inspiration can be heard in the work of Gustav Holst in his Egdon Heath work and music was a central part of rural life – Thomas Hardy took part in the West Gallery musical tradition here. Materials from the National Landscape have made a significant contribution to artistic work around the world. For example, Purbeck stone was crafted into celebrated decorative work in St Paul's Cathedral and Blenheim Palace by Sir James Thornhill. High profile architectural advances continue at Hooke Park promote contemporary use of natural materials derived from the National Landscape.
The Dorset landscape continues to attract artists, writers and musicians to visit and live, with over 3% employment in the creative industries in Dorset. The landscape provides inspiration and a backdrop for renowned artists and cultural organisations including PJ Harvey, Cape Farewell, Common Ground and John Makepeace. Over 600 artists open their studios during Dorset Art Weeks with Purbeck Art Weeks and other open studio events also very popular. There are also five National Portfolio Organisations funded by Arts Council England in Dorset (Activate Performing Arts, Artsreach, Bridport Art Centre, B-Side, Diverse City); five based in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and two based close to the north at Yeovil. These form a supportive backbone for arts development and strive to provide a rich cultural programme for people who live, work and visit the National Landscape. They have exemplary experience of delivering high quality engaging arts project in the landscape, and these organisations and artists represent a network for partnership projects between artists, producers and the National Landscape.

Cultural landscape and natural beauty

The rich legacy of landscape-inspired work by writers, artists and musicians of the past has been recognised as one of the special qualities of the Dorset National Landscape. The work created by these nationally and internationally renowned figures not only depict landscapes of the past but help us understand more about how people lived and how both landscape and lives have changed over time.
Artistic responses to landscape also help us interact with and be sensitive towards natural beauty in ways which scientific, reductive approaches cannot. It is essential that this experiential element of landscape is recognised, and access to it is enhanced for the benefits it can bring to people's lives. The creative exploration of place, through music, painting, written and spoken word, and dance opens up the experience of landscape beyond the world of science and policy and helps us better understand our place in the world. With better understanding comes better choices and better stewardship; the basis of a more sustainable future.

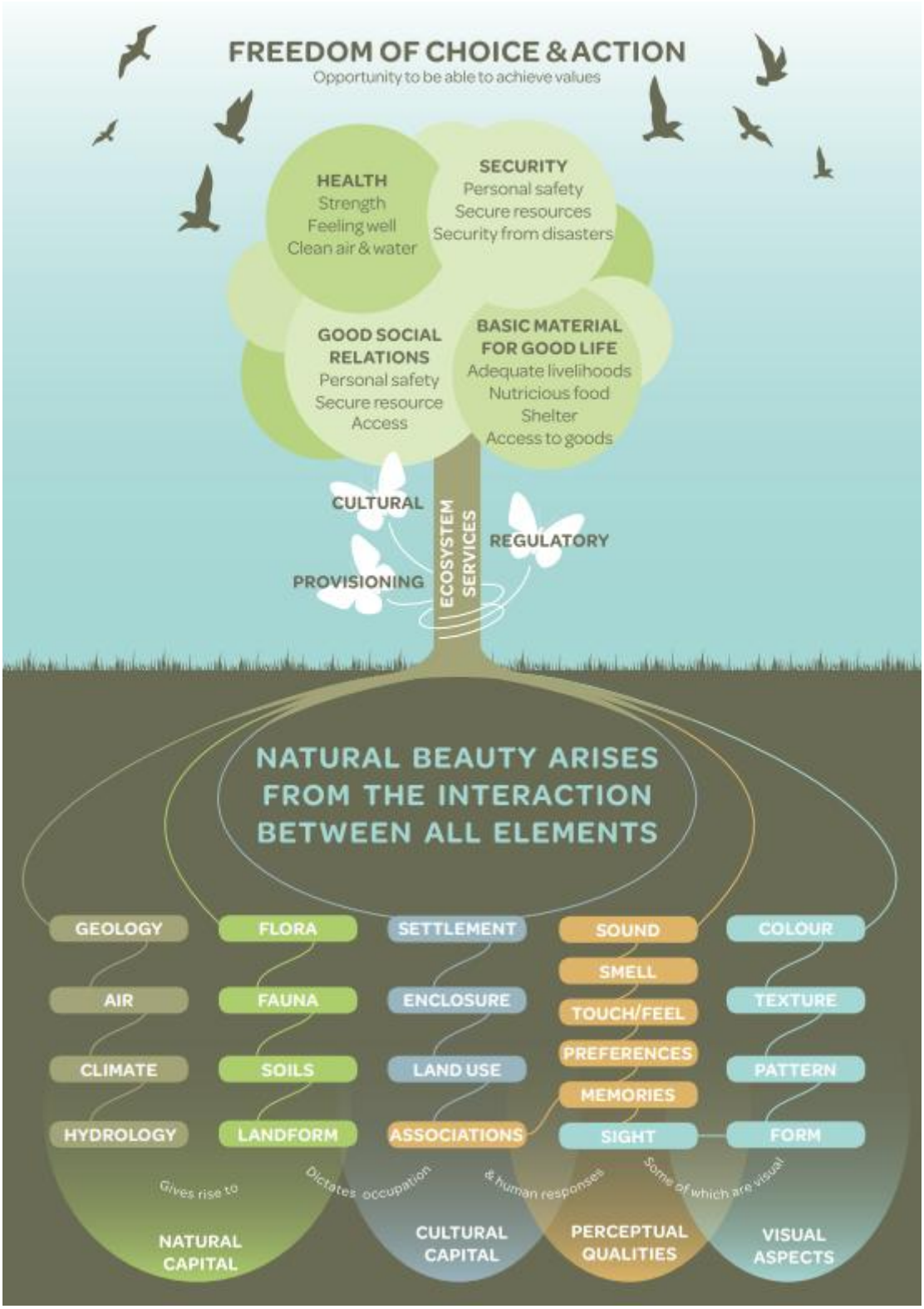


Figure 1 Natural beauty arises from landscape elements which can be described as natural and cultural capital

6. LANDSCAPE & SEASCAPE CHARACTER

This chapter is largely derived from other official sources. It describes the character of defined landscape types, the condition of the landscape and the coastal and seascape character.

6.1. National Character Areas

At a national level, England is divided into 159 National Character Areas (NCAs), large areas that share similar landscape characteristics. The Dorset National Landscape covers NCAs 136 South Purbeck and 139 Marshwood and Powerstock Vales in their entirety, and a significant area of 134 Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase and 138 Weymouth Lowlands. Towards the boundary, the designation overlaps smaller areas of 133 Blackmoor Vale and the Vale of Wardour, 135 Dorset Heaths, 140 Yeovil Scarplands and 147 Blackdowns.
Natural England has authored the NCA profiles; each has a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape and outline the ecosystem services it provides and the key drivers for change. These inform Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) designed to achieve sustainable growth and a more secure environmental future. The NCA profiles can be viewed at www.gov.uk

6.2. Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment

A Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) for the Dorset National Landscape – Conserving Character – was published in 2008 and revised in 2018 (available at www.dorset-nl.org.uk). The Dorset Coast Landscape & Seascape Character Assessment (LSCA) was published in September 2010.
These documents provide an understanding of:

- The qualities and features that make the landscape/seascape special
- How these features combine in different ways in different places to give each area its own unique character
- The strength and condition of these features and how they are changing.

The character assessments for Dorset National Landscape sit alongside and geographically overlap with other assessments, such as those that exist at a county-wide level and the suite of National Character Area (NCA) profiles for England. Consequently, there is some overlap between the content of these broader studies, such as the NCA's statements of environmental opportunities, and out LCA work. Overall, our character assessments offer a finer level of granularity in terms of the character areas that they describe.
In this section we have summarised the key characteristics of the different landscape and seascape types. This provides a spatial framework for management of the National Landscape. The Dorset National Landscape's LCA identifies 14 landscape types, such as open chalk downland, clay vales, limestone hills and rolling wooded pasture. These landscape types share common combinations of geology, topography, vegetation and human influence but are not specific to a particular location. The LCA breaks these landscape types into individual and unique geographical areas called landscape character areas, such as the Upper Piddle Valley or Marshwood Vale. The assessment identifies 35 landscape character areas in the National Landscape.
The character and quality of the land and sea interface is an important aspect of the National Landscape, however the coastline is constantly changing, subject to powerful coastal and hydrological processes. The Dorset Coast Landscape and Seascape Assessment is a valuable tool, promoting an integrated approach to decision making in this transitional area. The assessment reflects the terrestrial landscape character types identified in Conserving Character, plus it identifies 11 seascape character types of coast and sea.
It is important to identify and recognise the landscape and seascape character types/areas that lie outside the National Landscape boundary as they contribute to the setting of the area.

6.3. Landscape character types

The following descriptions give a summary of the character or the key characteristics of the landscape and the seascape types that are within or contiguous with the National Landscape boundary.

Map 4 Landscape Type (by colour); individual Landscape Character Areas are labelled.

Open Chalk Downland

The open chalk uplands of the Chaldon Downs, Dorchester Downs and South Dorset Downs form significant areas of the designated area. They are the National Landscape's largest-scale landscapes of simple, rolling open hills and dry valleys with large agricultural estates mainly under arable production. Partly circled by a narrow face of steep escarpments, the open uplands provide the setting for a series of intimate chalk river valleys. There are strong cultural associations with Thomas Hardy.

Chalk Ridge / Escarpment

The North, West and South Escarpments and the Purbeck Ridge form dramatic backdrops to, and give views of, much of the surrounding National Landscape. With an undeveloped and open character, this landscape type with its steep sides supports important patches of chalk grasslands and hanging woodlands.

Chalk Valley & Downland

The distinctive, secluded chalk valleys of the National Landscape drain the surrounding open chalk downlands. Flowing southwards into the larger Stour, Piddle and Frome rivers, each valley has its own unique character and sense of place, with a diversity of important habitats and cultural features.

With traces of old water meadows, distinctive church spires, country houses and characteristic settlements of stone, brick and flint, the chalk valleys display a rich rural cultural heritage.

Clay Valley

The sweeping landscapes of the Kimmeridge Coast, Corfe, and Bride Valleys each have a unique identity. Enclosed by surrounding escarpments and ridges, they generally have a settled rural character with coastal influences. A patchwork of rolling pastures and scattered woodlands have been shaped by centuries of woodland clearance and agricultural improvement. Small farmsteads and nucleated villages with landmark churches are dotted throughout the landscape.

Lowland Heathland

The internationally important lowland heathland landscape of the South Purbeck Heaths, similar to many other heathland landscapes around the Poole Basin, is a complex and diverse mosaic of open dry and wet heath and wooded scrubby heath. A range of land uses affect condition, with the fragile heaths under constant pressures. Remaining heathland patches, many of which are internationally important habitats, are fragmented by significant conifer plantations, with a variety of land uses including mineral extraction and planned farms.

Valley Pasture

The valley pasture landscape type is found along the Rivers Stour and Frome, formed from alluvial deposits. They have wide, open meandering floodplains that historically support transport routes and market towns around the fringes. A series of wet woodlands, large pastures and water meadows are typical of this landscape type.

Limestone Plateau

The Purbeck Plateau is the only limestone plateau in the Dorset National Landscape. It has a simple but striking character represented by its exposed and treeless appearance. A long tradition of stone extraction has left its mark, shaping a near continuous network of stone walls, extraction routes and small quarries dotted across the area. Limestone villages and open grasslands add to the character of this distinct landscape type.

Ridge & Vale

The ridge and vale landscape type covers two character areas to the east and west of Weymouth. Backed by the South Dorset Escarpment, these types are characterised by low lying limestone ridges running east to west, with undulating clay vales of mixed farming and nucleated villages.

Rolling Wooded Pasture

The rolling wooded pasture landscape type is found around the margins of the Dorset Heaths. Although land cover varies, the areas are unified by remnant heathy patches within a well wooded landscape of pastures and dense hedgerows, shaping an intimate and rural landscape. Rempstone has a more agricultural character; towards Lulworth the area has strong parkland character.

Coastal Grassland

Coastal grasslands, as a habitat, are found along much of the immediate coastline. It becomes a landscape type where the characteristic coarse grasses, exposed by the full force of the coast, are backed by the southern escarpment and divide it from the inland landscapes. A lack of development and the sweeping coastal views underpin a natural appearance.

Clay Vale

The clay vale landscape type is represented by the intimate and rural Marshwood, Halstock and Blackmore Vales. They have predominantly small pastoral fields with trimmed hedgerows and hedgerow oaks, patterns of medieval settlement and clearance and a long tradition of dairy farming. Scattered farmsteads underpin the largely undeveloped and tranquil character.

Wooded Hills

Significant areas of the western extent of the National Landscape form the intimate wooded hills landscape type, with several clusters of conical shaped hills formed around the Marshwood Vale. Typically, woodland is found on the valley sides with a network of dense hedgerows, holloways, winding lanes and small clustered settlements dotted throughout the pastoral landscape. The market and coastal towns in and around the area support a long tradition of artistic interpretation of the landscape and local cultural traditions.

Limestone Hills

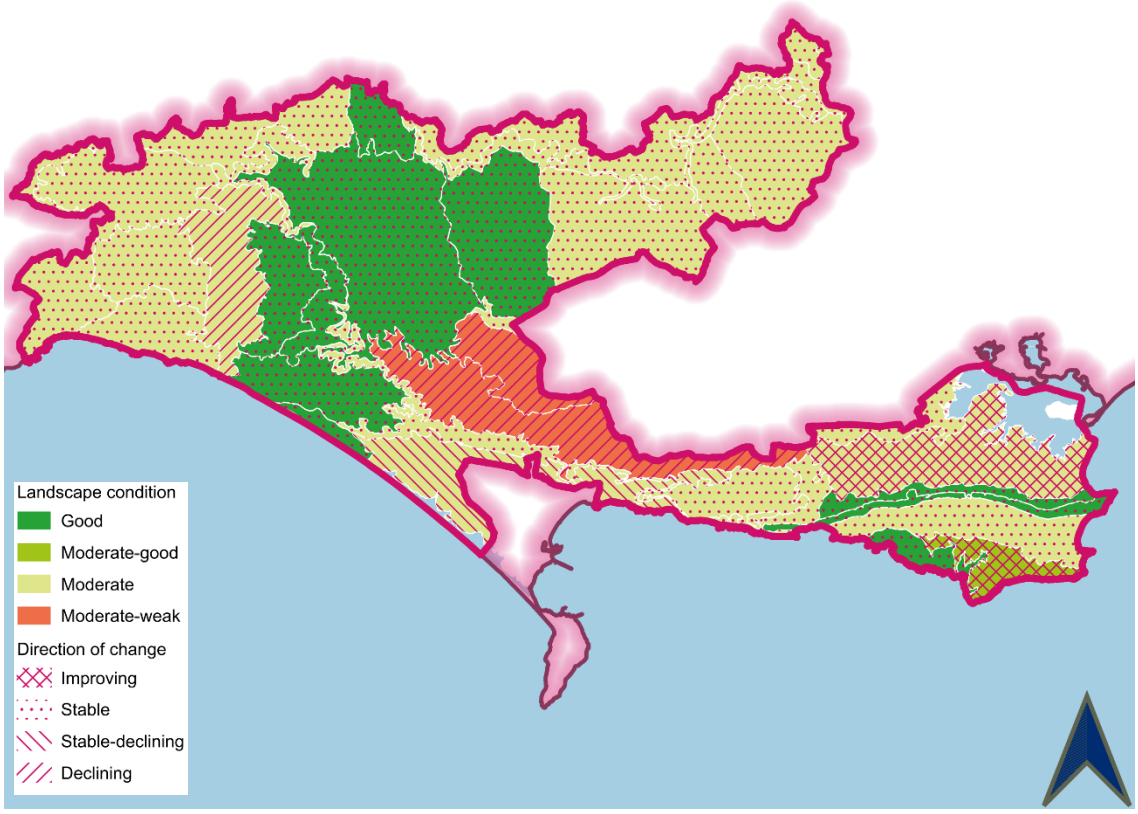
Although found elsewhere around the northern part of the county, the only limestone hill landscape within the National Landscape is found at Melbury Park. Much of the area is dominated by the designed parkland at Melbury with its distinctive, sweeping landscape. Elsewhere, a series of low, rounded limestone hills with dense wooded sides contrast to the broad, clay valleys of pastures, arable fields, winding lanes and springs.

Undulating River Valley

The undulating river valleys of the Brit and Axe are centred on the floodplains and associated surrounding branching valleys and undulating hills. They have a diverse character ranging from open countryside to market towns and villages dotted along the upper terraces. Characteristic features include damp pastures, linear wet woodlands along the valley floor with small broadleaved woodlands dotted around the surrounding hills.

6.4. Landscape condition

Each landscape character area has been assessed in 2018 for its condition and the direction of travel. This assessment helps to prioritise action geographically. More detail can be found in the Dorset National Landscape LCA.



Map 5 Landscape condition

Application of the Management and Planning Guidelines for each character type in the LCA will help address character weaknesses and reverse declining quality.

6.5. Transition to the sea: coastal seascape character types

Sandy Beaches

These predominantly sandy beaches are generally not associated with extensive sand dune systems, except at Studland. They are important recreational beaches, have warm sea temperatures and are important for marine and coastal biodiversity. Coastal defences are present on some beaches.

Shingle Beaches and Spits

Chesil Beach is an impressive example of this type due to its height and extent and is a unique feature on the Dorset coast. These areas have large, often raised shingle beaches and spits. Dominated by shingle, the grain size varies from very fine to large shingle and sometimes mixed with sand. They are often important for protection of cliff bases.

Slumped Cliffs

These are softer rock cliffs, susceptible to erosion and landslips although may be stable for long periods. The softer substrate provides habitat for colonisation of cliffs with vegetation over time. Beaches, usually shingle, protect cliff bases. Significant fossils are often present and they are an important cliff type within the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.

Hard Rock Cliffs

These hard cliffs are variously made of sandstone, chalk or limestone with vertical or near vertical faces and ledges. They are often dramatic, with pinnacles and pillars, and are often

highly visible from long distances - conversely, they also provide significant panoramic viewpoints. They are generally un-vegetated with ledges important for nesting seabirds. While still mobile, in comparison to the slumped cliffs seascape type they are more stable and resistant to erosion. They are also an important cliff type within the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.

Intertidal Rock Ledges

These horizontal rock ledges within the intertidal zone include loose rocks and boulders and experience varying levels of inundation depending on tides and location. They often include important intertidal habitats and are frequently in remote, inaccessible locations.

Natural Harbour

This is the type for Poole Harbour (the world's largest natural harbour), the majority of which lies within the National Landscape boundary. With a distinctive mix of tidal mudflats, marshland, reed bed, open water and shingle bank it has indented and shallow shorelines to the harbour which resemble large lakes. Characterised by a large scale, open, tranquil and generally unspoilt landscape it is of significant conservation value and offers important vistas and views of historic and cultural importance.

Saline Lagoon

The Fleet is the tidal water impounded by Chesil Bank; open to the sea through Portland Harbour. Described as the finest example of a lagoon of its type, it includes a distinctive mix of tidal mudflats, marshland, reed bed, open water and shingle bank, has an indented and shallow shoreline and is of a large scale: open, tranquil and generally unspoilt. As with Poole Harbour, it is internationally important for wildlife and has important vistas and views of historic and cultural importance particularly related to Abbotsbury and the ancient Swannery.

7. POLICY FRAMEWORK

This chapter includes the policy framework setting out how the natural beauty of this area is to be conserved and enhanced.

This Policy Framework sets out our objectives (what we want to achieve) and policies (broadly how we will meet the objectives) for managing the National Landscape to achieve the Vision. The policy framework concentrates on three key areas of interaction with natural beauty and the National Landscape's landscape:

- **A: The Working Landscape**, covering farming, forestry, fishing and conservation land management within the National Landscape.
- **B: Exploring, Understanding and Engaging**, covering access, tourism, recreation and educational use of the National Landscape.
- **C: Planning for Landscape Quality**, covering forward planning, development management and infrastructure.

In addition, there are objectives and policies which refer to the methods by which the conservation and enhancement of the National Landscape's natural beauty will be best achieved. This is called:

- **D: Ways of Working**

Each chapter includes background information to describe the topic, its significance to the National Landscape and its purposes, and a description of the current pressures and opportunities that relate to the topic.

There is also a description of the organisations with which the National Landscape Partnership works on each topic: this list is not exclusive, and all parties interested in delivery are welcomed.

Policy context

This Management Plan sets out the priorities specifically for the Dorset National Landscape in relation to the purposes of the National Landscape designation. Delivery of the plan will need to address several key challenges which have implications for the National Landscape in coming years, described in Chapter 4.

There are many other plans, strategies and policies that affect the management of the National Landscape. These are presented in the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the National Landscape Management Plan and are not repeated within this document.

Action planning

Annual, rolling action plans are drawn up by the National Landscape team. These concentrate on delivery directly by the team and its immediate partners and are available on the National Landscape website. 'Offers' of delivery are welcomed and should be made directly to the National Landscape team manager.

7.1. THE WORKING LANDSCAPE

This chapter is largely focussed on land management, fishing, and the products that come from them. While this is largely farming and forestry for producing food, fibre and fuel, this chapter also encompasses land management for conservation and/or recreational uses. On some sites, these are the primary aims, but even sites managed intensively for food/wood production support a range of wildlife and other ecosystem services.

This chapter also considers fishing as an industry – primarily commercial sea fishing but also freshwater fishing interests; recreational uses are considered in chapter 9.2. The fishing industry holds an important place in the community and identity of coastal parts of the National Landscape.

All these activities are, or have traditionally been, about providing food, drink, wood and fibre and biomass, but there is so much more that a well-managed landscape can provide including reduced flood risk, cleaner air and water alongside conservation 'products' such as increased farmland bird populations or enhanced grassland flora. Accessing 'green finance' to pay for these public goods can provide an important income stream to support sustainable farm businesses. These goods are considered here, particularly as people's consumption choices can influence forms and styles of production.

The National Landscape is largely a farmed landscape with farming occupying 76% and forestry 12%. The number of land holdings in the National Landscape is 991 (down from 1,057 in 2016) and 160 registered fishing boats of under 10m operating from ports within and adjacent to the National Landscape. There are many businesses which operate in the National Landscape which are beneficial for its economy, particularly the green economy. There are relevant policies throughout this plan which should encourage those enterprises.

7.1.1. SIGNIFICANCE

Natural beauty and the National Landscape's special qualities:

- **Landscape & landform**

  Many of the landscape features of today are the result of around 8,000 years of land management choices for food production and human settlement, including the extent and type of woodlands and hedgerows, the presence of grasslands, heathlands, downlands and arable land. To conserve and enhance natural beauty while maintaining food production, the methods by which that food is produced are critical – there is a big opportunity for regenerative approaches.

  In 2024 32% of the National Landscape was covered by environmental stewardship and 58% of woodlands were managed.

- **Wildlife**

  Relatively continuous land management practices for hundreds, even thousands of years, has created the National Landscape's main valued terrestrial habitats. Agricultural intensification (and in some cases, abandonment) over the last century has caused the loss or shrinkage of these. There is a significant coverage of biodiversity designations with 13 Special Areas of Conservation (three of which have marine components) and four Special Protection Areas in the National Landscape (one of which has marine components) plus three Marine Conservation Zones on its boundary. Together with 75 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 679 Sites of Nature Conservation Interest, they form the building blocks of a wildlife-rich landscape.

- **Living textbook**

  The National Landscape's history of agricultural occupation has left significant marks in the landscape, from 'Celtic' field systems to vernacular farm buildings and related structures. Many of the National Landscape's villages' historic buildings also relate to an agricultural background.
  In 2025, there were: 4,009 listed buildings (10 at risk); 542 scheduled monuments (83 at risk); 19 registered parks and gardens; a World Heritage Site and ten National Nature Reserves.

- **Cultural legacy**

  Over the centuries, Dorset's landscapes and their management have inspired poets, authors, scientists and artists, many of whom have left a rich legacy of cultural associations.
  Their output is part of the record of rural life, as well as a collection of emotional and artistic responses to the place. Some of Dorset's strong current cultural sector have engaged with land management, in some cases raising questions or making provocations about sustainability, the origins of our food and the artistry inherent in managing the land. There are also rich cultural community events, such as wassailing and Apple Day, which help foster a connection between people and place.

7.1.2. OPPORTUNITIES & PRESSURES

Opportunities

- There are significant opportunities for the Dorset National Landscape Partnership to support delivery of national and regional policy ambitions, including The Environment Improvement Plan, the Land Use Framework, The National Food Strategy, Wilder Forests, The Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Dorset National Landscape Nature Recovery Plan, Catchment Management Plans, Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans and the Poole Harbour Nutrient Management Plan. This also includes aligning with evolving and innovative approaches to nature recovery, climate resilience, and sustainable land management.
- Environment Land Management Schemes provide an opportunity to deliver numerous public benefits, particularly as other forms of farm support are phased out. These schemes support regenerative land management while recovering nature, through the creation and restoration of habitats, including grassland, woodland, hedgerow, heath, and wetland. They also mitigate the impacts of climate change, conserve heritage, and reduce the impacts of natural hazards.
- There is scope to expand woodland and forestry, and particularly those that deliver multiple benefits for climate, nature, and people, as well as timber that is produced sensitively, particularly in continuous cover systems. Opportunities also exist to promote agroforestry, and trees outside woodlands. There is opportunity to bring existing woodlands into sensitive active management. All this should lead to increased local materials for construction and fibre.
- Rivers, wetlands, and particularly valley mires and chalk streams, present opportunities for habitat restoration and creation, flood risk management, carbon sequestration, and other ecosystem services. Integrated catchment management can help improve water quality and resilience to climate change.
- The Food, Farming & Countryside Commission's Farming for Change research shows that a transition to regenerative farming and agroecology can significantly reduce emissions, support species abundance and maintain food production, growing enough healthy and sustainable food for all. This scenario also ensures we do not export

environmental impacts overseas and provides a broad pathway for resilient and sustainable farm businesses to take responsibility for food security. Regenerative farming is a transformative approach to farming that prioritises restoring soil health, biodiversity, and ecosystem services as the foundation of productive and resilient food systems and landscapes.

- Farm systems which prioritise soil health are more resilient to prolonged periods of wet or dry weather as well as contributing more to the drawdown and sequestration of atmospheric carbon; they are in many cases more profitable.
- Farming clusters, both geographic and topic-based cover a large part of this landscape. Clusters enable rich knowledge exchange and peer-to-peer support for a farming transition.
- The Dorset National Landscape can act as a convenor and showcase successful approaches to regenerative land management and nature recovery. Particularly, there is significant opportunity to facilitate delivery of innovative and effective partnerships across catchments, farms, and communities, that support collaborative approaches to regenerative land and water management.
- Dorset Council's County Farm strategy includes support for new entrants and demonstrating sustainable land management.
- Investment in citizen science can further help deliver nature recovery at scale.
- The adoption of a Natural Capital approach, and accessing ethical green finance, can facilitate investment in the conservation and enhancement of the landscape, whilst mitigating the impacts of climate change, nature loss, and nutrient pollution.
- There is potential to support small rural businesses, local food and fibre processing infrastructure, and markets for sustainable products, including wood fuel and building retrofit materials.
- The rise of localism and circular economy approaches can help sustain rural livelihoods and strengthen community resilience.
- Built and human heritage underpins landscape character; conserving it maintains a sense of place and time depth. It also provides many opportunities for engagement to audiences beyond those focussed on nature.
- While some fishing practices such as scallop dredging and bottom trawling can be incredibly destructive of important marine habitats, we already have examples off the Dorset coast which demonstrate the rapid regeneration that can be achieved when these practices are stopped. This regeneration supports good harvestable production as well. We are well placed here to take this to the next level and demonstrate the recovery that a truly sustainable fishing industry might bring about

Pressures

- We are already feeling the impacts of climate change, and it is forecast to get more severe. Without adequate mitigation and adaptation, this will lead to:
    - Sites which are rich in nature currently are likely to remain important locations to allow adaptation of wildlife, whilst in areas where nature is already declining we may see further reduced species diversity and abundance, with forecast changes favouring generalist species over specialists.
    - Ongoing shifts in species ranges, with species able to colonise new areas (further north or in micro-habitats that were previously unsuitable), whilst potentially being lost from areas that become too warm or dry for them. New species are likely to colonise and, as a south coast county, Dorset is one of the first to see continental species arriving.
    - Increased pests and diseases, exacerbated by global trade and climate change.
    - Changing growing conditions requiring land managers to adapt what they grow and how they grow it.

    - Increased storminess, longer dry periods, and extreme weather events leading to greater impact from fires, flooding (coastal, groundwater, and fluvial), and landslides.
    - Sea-level rise, with impacts in low-lying areas such as the shores of Poole Harbour.
    - Impacts on built heritage through erosion, wind damage and water ingress.
    - Socio-economic impacts derived from the direct impact of climate change elsewhere in the UK and abroad.
    - Increased frequency of severe wind and rain events damaging historic buildings and other monuments.
- Shifting political priorities have introduced uncertainty and reduced confidence within the farming sector. Uncertainty is compounded when funding streams close (temporarily or otherwise) without notice and will little information on future plans. Together this could threaten the viability of smaller farms and may lead to land consolidation, reduced workforce, and diminished capacity for conservation-focussed management.
- The Agricultural Transition is putting economic stress on many farming businesses. Equally it opens a greater variety of land management choices many of which compete or are perceived to compete. Intensive food production, novel cropping, biofuel, solar, rewilding and nature are potentially competing land use choices.
- Regulations, and particularly those affecting the use of construction materials, reduces the possibility of innovative local goods and services being utilised, and therefore sustaining the status quo.
- The need for agricultural infrastructure (livestock sheds, slurry lagoons, etc.) risks impacting landscape character if poorly implemented.
- Poor succession planning in farming businesses will lead to fewer, larger agri-businesses and reduced opportunities for new entrants.
- There is a lack of processing infrastructure for meat, timber and fibre, and limited access to capital for new entrants in countryside jobs.
- Poor quality soils, air, and water creates long-term pressures on farm businesses, as the benefits these assets provide has historically been undervalued.
- Historic land management practices, shaped by the need to produce food and sustain livelihoods, have contributed over time to losses in wildlife, pollution of water bodies, and changes in landscape character. .
- Persistent threats from pests and diseases (e.g., Chalara, blue tongue), invasive non-native species (e.g. grey squirrel, sika, muntjac and Rhododendron), other unmanaged species (notably native deer), and biosecurity risks at borders, within supply chains, and nurseries present a risk to native flora and fauna.
- Lack of current data and regular monitoring hampers effective planning and response.
- Most Dorset woodlands are small and form part of wider economic units, making it challenging to operate efficiently.
- Balancing the use of woodland biomass with health impacts from particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$).
- The cost of rural housing makes it hard to enter the land-working sector and could result in a loss of the required skills; it is difficult for new entrants to farming which can stifle innovation brought about by new entrants. This is exacerbated by poor public transport, which limits access to work and training, particularly for young people. The situation is worsened by limited access to capital
- Second homes, pony paddocks, and rising rural housing costs are particularly acute in some areas, impacting the working landscape and local communities.

7.1.3. ORGANISATIONS IMPORTANT TO DELIVERY

Defra, Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Historic England, farmers and landowners and their representatives, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group SW, National Trust, RSPB, Dorset Catchment Partnership, Dorset Coast Forum, Litter Free Dorset, Local Authorities, Dorset Food & Drink, Kingston Maurward College, Dorset Climate Action Network, Dorset Museums Advisory Panel.

7.1.4. OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

OBJECTIVE A1: CONSERVING AND ENHANCING NATURE

Land and sea are managed to support nature recovery, conserve and enhance natural beauty, ecosystems, and the essential benefits they provide, such as clean air, water, and biodiversity. Areas of high and high potential nature value are managed primarily for nature; productive land uses in other areas are undertaken in a way which minimises or reverses environmental harms. Dorset's distinctive geodiversity is protected and celebrated as an integral part of nature and for its role supporting landscape character, scientific understanding, and community engagement for present and future generations.

Policy A1a Deliver landscape-scale nature recovery and habitat connectivity

- Expand and connect habitats across the landscape, restoring grasslands, woodlands, hedgerows, heathlands, wetlands and rivers to support species movement and ecosystem resilience, as set out in the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Dorset National Landscape Nature Recovery Plan and as required for the Protected Landscape Target and Outcome Framework.
- Manage land and sea at a scale, reinstating natural processes and building ecological dynamism across landscapes managed for nature, to enhance resilience and support long-term nature recovery.
- Implement nature recovery initiatives aligned with the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Dorset National Landscape Nature Recovery Plan.
- Increase the area and quality of sites that meet qualifying criteria for '30 by 30', ensuring effective long-term management in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Support management of non-native invasive species.
- Support citizen science and community monitoring to improve biodiversity data for adaptive management.

Policy A1b Integrate soil, air, and water quality improvements into land management

- Support a just transition to more regenerative or agroecological forms of agriculture which
    - underpin sustainable farm businesses resilient to environmental and economic shocks,
    - recover soil structure for greater infiltration and soil water storage capacity, reducing downstream flood risk and increasing resilience to flood and drought
    - recover soil nutrient cycling to reduce reliance on fertilisers
    - encourage integrated pest management to reduce reliance on pesticides
- Support a just transition towards more regenerative forms of forestry which
    - maintain canopy cover
    - support a wide species diversity with a weighting towards native and climate-resilient tree species
- Support multi-functional land use choices compatible with the purposes of designation.

- Implement low-nitrate and low-ammonia farming practices and incentivise land-use changes to reduce emissions.
- Implement appropriate land management and restore wetlands and peat to improve water quality, reduce nutrient pollution, and lock in carbon.
- Strengthen integrated catchment management partnerships to effectively deliver Catchment Plans, Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans, and other relevant plans and policies.
- Require nutrient offsetting and air quality impact assessments for major rural developments.

Policy A1c Enhance coastal, river and wetland ecosystems for biodiversity and resilience

- Prioritise habitat restoration and managed realignment along coasts to improve resilience to sea-level rise and flooding.
- Expand Marine Protected Areas and protect coastal wetlands to meet biodiversity and climate targets.
- Coordinate sustainable coastal and catchment management via established partnerships

Policy A1d Expand sustainably managed woodlands and greater numbers of trees outside woodlands

- Promote woodland expansion delivering multiple benefits for climate, nature and people, as set out in the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Dorset National Landscape Nature Recovery Plan and as required for the Protected Landscape Target and Outcome Framework.
- Encourage sensitive active management of existing woodlands to increase local sustainable timber and fibre supply.
- Promote appropriate tree planting outside woodlands in hedgerows, riparian strips and agroforestry systems with the 'right tree, right place' principle.
- Facilitate local processing infrastructure to support sustainable woodland products.

Policy A1e Protect and promote geodiversity as a core component of nature and the landscape

- Embed geodiversity considerations into local planning policies and landscape-scale initiatives.
- Prioritise conservation and restoration of key geological sites, including quarries and features, and action that works with the dynamic nature of the coastline, and that are aligned with the Jurassic Coast Partnership Plan.
- Foster partnerships to raise awareness and engage communities in geodiversity conservation through citizen science and education.

OBJECTIVE A2 CONSERVING AND ENHANCING HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

The historic environment and its setting are conserved and enhanced, ensuring its cultural significance is protected for future generations.

Policy A2a Conserve and celebrate Dorset's historic environment

- Work with heritage organisations and landowners to identify, conserve and enhance historic features and landscapes.

- Integrate historic environment considerations into land management and development planning.
- Support interpretation, education and community engagement to celebrate Dorset's cultural heritage.
- Where loss is inevitable (e.g. through coastal erosion), promote recording and celebration.

OBJECTIVE A3 ADAPTING TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Land and sea management supports natural processes, enabling nature, landscapes and ecosystems to adapt to climate change and other environmental shifts.

Policy A3a Implement nature-based solutions for climate adaptation and resilience

- Restore natural floodplain function, wetlands, and valley mires to enhance carbon sequestration and flood mitigation and drought resilience.
- Develop and implement sector-specific climate adaptation plans (e.g. farming, forestry, tourism) integrated into local planning.
- Promote multi-functional landscapes that include expanded networks of parkland, orchards, agroforestry, and hedgerow along with nature-based solutions to improve resilience.
- Support responsible reintroduction of keystone species that reinstate natural processes.
- Support research and innovation in climate-resilient land management and water efficiency.
- Support communities and businesses to adapt and build resilience to evolving climate impacts, such as stormwater management and heat stress, though nature-based resilience measures.

Policy A3b Support coastal management which promotes natural processes

- Seek opportunities for nature recovery and reinstating natural processes through Shoreline Management Planning.
- Ensure the Outstanding Universal Value of the Dorset & East Devon World Heritage Site is protected

OBJECTIVE A4 BUILDING SKILLS THAT CONSERVE AND ENHANCE NATURAL BEAUTY

Skills in sustainable land management, conservation and the green economy are developed to support resilient communities and ecosystems.

Policy A4a Develop skills and capacity for sustainable land and natural resource management

- Deliver training, apprenticeships and demonstration projects in regenerative agriculture, conservation and green economy skills.
- Facilitate knowledge exchange and best practice sharing across sectors and communities.

Support succession planning and attract new entrants into farming, forestry and conservation sectors. **Policy A4b Develop skills and capacity for heritage conservation.**

- Deliver training, apprenticeships and demonstration projects in traditional heritage skills such as dry stone walling, thatching, glazing, carpentry and lime plastering.
- Facilitate knowledge exchange and best practice sharing between craftspeople, conservation organisations and communities.
- Encourage new entrants into traditional building and heritage crafts.

- Promote heritage skills as a way of enhancing landscape character, cultural identity, and local employment opportunities.

OBJECTIVE A5 PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE MARKETS

Markets for sustainably produced goods and services are encouraged, supporting local economies while protecting the environment.

Policy A5a Foster markets for sustainable local products, and promote ethical green finance for the rural economy

- Develop markets for locally produced, sustainably managed food, timber, fibre and other natural products.
- Support local processing infrastructure and supply chains to add value to sustainable products.
- Encourage adoption of natural capital approaches and access to ethical green finance for conservation and climate mitigation projects.
- Promote circular economy initiatives including reuse, recycling and use of biodegradable local materials.

7.2. EXPLORING, UNDERSTANDING, ENGAGING

This chapter focuses on supporting local people and visitors to explore, understand and engage with the Dorset National Landscape in a positive and equitable way.

The coast and countryside of the Dorset National Landscape is a popular area for recreation and leisure. While the National Landscape designation carries no statutory purpose to enhance access, the remit is to manage the demand for recreation within the context of the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the importance of nature to people's well-being has been well documented. The Dorset National Landscape's high-quality landscape and heritage makes a substantial contribution to people's nature connectedness and physical health and mental wellbeing, offering opportunities for physical activity, social interaction, relaxation and inspiration. Many people, however, still face barriers to accessing the benefits of this landscape.

Dorset has an extensive public rights of way network of nearly 3,000 miles of footpaths, bridleways and byways. The National Landscape includes 71 miles of the South West Coast Path National Trail (part of the King Charles III England Coast Path) and several other promoted long-distance walking and cycling routes. Walking is the most popular recreational activity nationally and it is the main activity of leisure trips.

Nearly 75,000 people live within the National Landscape boundary, making it one of the most heavily populated National Landscapes in the country – though as the fifth largest National Landscape, it remains sparsely populated in many areas. Local communities have a fundamental role in safeguarding its future; the more people feel a connection to, use and enjoy the landscape, the greater their pride of place and involvement in its protection.

In 2023, there were estimated to be over 10 million day trips to the National Landscape and 5.9 million visitor nights. The landscape underpins our tourism-based economy and supports local services. Tourism supports nearly 10,000 full time equivalent jobs in the National Landscape, with visitor spend contributing £800 million to the local economy (2023 figures). The impact of visitors needs to be carefully managed to ensure that the National Landscape can continue to sustain these benefits for generations to come, while retaining its natural beauty.

The landscape also presents a huge educational resource; it is a popular destination for visiting school trips and students; it is also utilised in local education. Engaging people of all ages in the landscape and its special qualities is an important step in fostering good stewardship.

7.2.1. SIGNIFICANCE

- **Landscape & landform**

  The varied landscape offers a range of experiences for recreation and learning, both inland and along the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site. The National Landscape includes coastal and market towns, attractive villages and a wide range of natural and cultural heritage assets, with key sites such as Corfe Castle, Studland, Maiden Castle and Durdle Door. Away from these key 'honey-pot' sites, visitors and local communities can experience tranquillity in less well known but equally beautiful countryside and coastal locations.

- **Wildlife**

  The sites managed for wildlife by the National Trust, Natural England, Dorset Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Dorset Countryside and others often provide accessible countryside for visitors through provision of car parking, links to public transport and other visitor facilities. Wildlife also provides an inspiration for people to explore and help conserve the landscape. Additionally, there are 6,160 hectares of open, accessible countryside in the National Landscape.

- **Living textbook**

  The National Landscape offers a 'living textbook' for people of all ages to experience, spanning geology, wildlife, human influence and natural processes in the landscape and adjoining marine environment. The landscape is firmly embedded in many educational initiatives in Dorset e.g. a strong Forest Schools network, outdoor education centres and Kingston Maurward College. There are also established networks of adult learning for the large population of active retired such as U3A, village societies and the WI.

- **Cultural legacy**

  The legacy of landscape inspired work by authors, poets, scientists and artists is an important resource that can galvanise an appreciation of landscape and landscape change. The National Landscape today remains a source of inspiration and has a vibrant contemporary arts community, which together with a rich cultural tradition, adds to the quality of life of residents and draws many visitors. The landscape is used effectively as a venue for cultural performance - such as the Inside Out Dorset festival, produced by Activate, as well as many smaller scale local productions. The strong arts community in Dorset also provides a creative way to engage diverse audiences, nurturing a sense of place and communicating complex issues
  Local museums play an important role in preserving and animating significant collections of cultural importance.

7.2.2. OPPORTUNITIES & PRESSURES

Opportunities

- Dorset National Landscape provides outstanding health and wellbeing opportunities through active recreation and nature connectedness, which aligns well with the Our Dorset Working Better Together Strategy priorities, though resourcing at scale is required. Green and blue spaces present opportunities for social prescribing, building on good practice nationally. The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan recognises the value of the natural environment for health and wellbeing and the Landscape Review highlights the importance of taking a pro-active approach to widening opportunities to engage with the landscape to underserved communities. Exemplars of good practice are projects such as Flavours, Stepping into Nature and Nature Buddies. Collaborative initiatives between local communities, businesses, environmental & cultural organisations, social media communities & influencers can help reduce the negative impact of tourism in popular areas and spread positive impacts inland.
- Research shows that an emotional connection with nature and landscape leads to more pro-environmental behaviour; artist-led initiatives enable this type of connection. Dorset has a strong arts community, and there are good examples of artist-led approaches to improving the public realm, landscape interpretation, and creative consultation with local communities, all of which could be further developed with additional funding. High-quality cultural programming, including festivals, can help extend the season, reduce pressure at peak times and spread economic benefits throughout the year. Work with the National Landscape Association, endorsed by the Arts Council England Memorandum of Understanding, can bring new and wider opportunities.
- Voluntary codes of conduct for activities such as fossil collecting and coasteering raise understanding of impacts, reduce conflict and pressure and could be extended to include other issues such as inconsiderate use of the working landscape, foraging and kayaking. Increased public awareness of environmental issues could make more people

receptive to communicating landscape issues such as climate and coastal change at a local level.

- The successful Purbeck Goes Wild initiative, providing nature-based opportunities for school-aged young people, provides a useful collaborative model for establishing sustained landscape-focussed engagement with schools and youth organisations in other parts of Dorset.
- With support from the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, there is a growing network of farmers and landowners who have the confidence and infrastructure to welcome schools and other groups to learn about food production and nature.
- Volunteering can bring multiple benefits to health, wellbeing and employment prospects but environmental organisations need to remodel volunteer opportunities to be accessible / meet the needs of a wide range of people.
- Promotion of inland walking & cycling routes and public transport can spread visitor economic benefits and reduce the pressure on the coast, though better maintenance and waymarking of some routes would be needed to build a reliable and user-friendly offer. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will provide a framework for improvement delivery. National Nature Reserves provide enhanced opportunities for access to natural landscapes.
- Roadside boundary signs are a simple but impactful way to raise awareness of the Dorset National Landscape and opportunities for inland recreation could be signposted with traditional 'fingerpost' signs.
- Rationalisation and improved quality of landscape interpretation and safety signage, using JCT interpretation framework for coastal initiatives. There are also opportunities for artist-led approaches including temporary, site specific and permanent interpretative materials.
- Nature connectedness for people who are unable to visit the countryside could be enhanced through high quality, engaging online content.
- Connect with communities close to the National Landscape to maximise health, wellbeing and enjoyment opportunities.

Pressures

- High visitor numbers during peak holiday times often brings congestion and overcrowding to popular coastal sites. Conversely inland areas lack visitors and the associated economic benefits they bring.
- Public transport provision is very limited especially in rural areas away from the coast. People without cars are restricted in their ability to access the wider landscape. Most visits to the countryside are by car, impacting significantly on the environment and local community.
- The rights of way network is fragmented in many parts of the National Landscape, reducing the opportunities for recreation and forcing walkers and riders to use unsafe country roads. In addition, several areas designated as open access are inaccessible from any public right of way.
- Recreation and traffic pressure, from both residents and visitors, is impacting rural road and footpath networks, particularly along the coast.
- A significant number of people don't visit or have access to the National Landscape due to poverty, limited access to transport, rural isolation, lack of confidence, disability and cultural barriers. There is a need to ensure inclusive access to the landscape, promoting equitable enjoyment of natural spaces and supporting health and wellbeing for all communities.
- Climate and coastal change bring an increase in rockfalls, landslips and storm damage and potential danger to people visiting the coast and engaging people in understanding the hazards is challenging.

- Ongoing budget constraints, increasing pressure on funding sources and short-term funding reduce the capacity of organisations to build long term relationships with communities and develop sustainable engagement opportunities.
- Organisational and curriculum changes in schools and budgetary constraints for schools and environmental organisations make it difficult to offer long term landscape-focussed learning with schools.
- Second homes, holiday accommodation and high cost of housing has an impact on communities.
- Environmental volunteering is limited due to time and income pressures.
- Marine and beach litter as well as road litter and fly tipping continue to be detrimental to wildlife and natural beauty.
- There is limited awareness about the National Landscape, the change of name and the work of the Partnership amongst visitors and local people.
- Instagram tourism creates destination sites within the natural environment and bypasses the usual routes of promotion and education that help establish responsible visitor behaviour.

7.2.3. ORGANISATIONS IMPORTANT TO DELIVERY

Many organisations can contribute to delivering these objectives, including (but not limited to) Dorset Council (local highways authority, greenspace & mitigation teams), Dorset Wildlife Trust, RSPB , National Trust, Natural England, , Parish & Town Councils, Dorset Coast Forum including Jurassic Coast, South West Coast Path Association, Dorset Local Access Forum, NFU, The Ramblers, Transport Action Groups, Recreational user groups, Dorset, Litter Free Dorset, Dorset Heaths Partnership, Dorset Local Nature Partnership, Dorset Dogs, Dorset Local Visitor Economy Partnership, Visit Dorset, Dorset Race Equality Forum, South West Dorset Multicultural Network Dorset Youth, Activate Performing Arts, Artsreach, Arts Development Company and other cultural partners, museums, galleries, educational institutions, Historic England, , Active Dorset, Public Health Dorset and East Devon National Landscape.

7.2.4. OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

OBJECTIVE B1: ENABLING ENJOYMENT AND ACCESS FOR WELLBEING

Everyone can experience and access Dorset's landscapes, enjoying the health and wellbeing benefits they provide, whether in person or remotely. Opportunities to connect with nature and the countryside are plentiful and accessible, supporting physical and mental health for all, while respecting the special qualities of the National Landscape.

Policy B1a: Expand and improve opportunities for health and wellbeing through access to, and connection with the landscape

- Address barriers to access, particularly for under-represented groups
- Support and develop activities that foster wellbeing by enabling people to strengthen their own connection to nature and the landscape.
- Develop, co-create and support measures to improve access to the coast and countryside for all, ensuring compatibility with the purposes of National Landscape designation.
- Enable remote engagement with the landscape for those unable to visit in person.

OBJECTIVE B2: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND ACCESS

Sustainable tourism and access are widely available, supporting local communities while protecting Dorset's natural beauty. Visitor experiences are designed to spread economic

benefits, reduce pressure on sensitive sites, and encourage responsible enjoyment of the landscape.

Policy B2a: Develop and promote sustainable visitor experiences and access

- Develop and support visitor experiences that are compatible with the purposes of National Landscape designation, helping to spread economic benefits and reduce pressure on the busiest areas.
- Engage communities, cultural organisations, and tourism businesses in creating and promoting sustainable visitor experiences, including showcasing local food and drink.
- Improve connectivity and functionality of the public rights of way network, including long-distance routes.
- Promote integrated, sustainable access and public transport options within the National Landscape.
- Support and promote measures to reduce litter - including marine and beach litter - and encourage safe, considerate use of the coast and countryside.
- Support opportunities for organisations providing outdoor activities and nature-based tourism

OBJECTIVE B3: FOSTERING UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS

There is wide awareness and understanding of the Dorset landscape, its special qualities, and the importance of its management. People of all ages and backgrounds are inspired and informed, with opportunities for learning and engagement that celebrate the area's unique character.

Policy B3a: Enhance interpretation and communication about the National Landscape

- Support and develop diverse visitor experiences that showcase and celebrate the special qualities of the National Landscape, reaching wide audiences.
- Rationalise and improve interpretation to enhance the visitor experience, reduce visual clutter, and inform the public about landscape features and safety, especially along the coast.
- Promote understanding of the dynamic nature of the landscape and how it is responding to climate change and other pressures.
- Highlight the significance of the National Landscape designation and the work of the Dorset National Landscape partnership and its wider network.

Policy B3b: Support the use of the National Landscape for life-long learning

- Support initiatives for children and young people to learn about the Dorset National Landscape through outdoor, curricular, and extra-curricular activities.
- Encourage lifelong learning opportunities within the National Landscape.

OBJECTIVE B4: ENGAGING LOCAL PEOPLE IN LANDSCAPE STEWARDSHIP

Local people are actively engaged in conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, cultural heritage, special qualities, and ecosystem benefits of the National Landscape. Community action and volunteering are at the heart of landscape stewardship, fostering a sense of ownership, reciprocity and pride.

Policy B4a: Support and diversify community engagement and stewardship

- Encourage and support parish and town councils, schools, community groups, children and young people, businesses, and individuals to participate in conserving and enhancing the National Landscape.
- Prioritise support to create opportunities for engagement with the landscape for underserved communities.
- Promote sustainable living within communities to reduce local environmental impacts and increase access to environmental benefits.
- Inspire and engage people in monitoring and recording landscape change.
- Support and celebrate local distinctiveness through events and engagement initiatives.

7.3. PLANNING FOR LANDSCAPE QUALITY

There is an obligation for all relevant authorities to seek to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of Dorset National Landscape. To fulfil this, the national importance of the landscape needs to be recognised and reinforced, thereby ensuring that changes within it and its setting achieve the highest standards of sustainability, design and quality.

Development affecting the National Landscape should be compatible with the character and appearance of the designated area and we should also aim to achieve landscape gain from development, wherever possible. This chapter contains objectives and policies that support sustainable development that conserves and enhances the natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape, while minimising impacts to natural processes and ecosystem flows.

The National Planning Policy Framework confirms that the overall purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. The Framework states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the beauty of National Landscapes, also recognising that the scale and extent of development within the designated area should be limited and that development in the setting should be carefully sited and designed.

The National Landscape is a living and constantly evolving landscape, the result of human interaction with the natural environment. Sensitively sited and designed development can make a positive contribution to the area, not only in the way it appears in the landscape but also in how it contributes to sustaining local communities and the landscape itself. However, inappropriate development is one of the greatest threats to the National Landscape, if its scale, siting and design are unsympathetic and results in negative impacts upon landscape character, landscape functions, and the ability of residents and visitors to enjoy the landscape.

Most planning decisions in the National Landscape are made by a local planning authority which, under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, have a statutory duty to seek to further the purpose of the designation (to conserve and enhance natural beauty) when discharging this and other functions. As the Government's statutory advisor on landscape, Natural England may provide advice on landscape matters, particularly in response to larger proposals. The National Landscape Team also provides landscape advice through an agreed planning protocol.

7.3.1. SIGNIFICANCE

- **Landscape & landform**

  The physical and perceptual characteristics of a landscape are what makes a place. The National Landscape is valued for its special qualities, which include its undeveloped rural character, exceptional undeveloped coastline, tranquillity and dark night skies. Such landscape attributes need to be maintained for the future, and this is best achieved through development that respects the pattern and character of the places in which it is located.

- **Wildlife**

  When development impacts upon wildlife, the planning system must ensure that these effects are dealt with appropriately, including through avoidance, mitigation and compensation. Ranging from locally important features to internationally significant sites, all habitats within the National Landscape contribute to the area's natural beauty. Avoiding harm and securing mitigation and enhancement measures that are appropriate to site specific considerations and in keeping with landscape character is important within landscape planning.

- **Living textbook**

  The National Landscape contains highly important natural and manmade landscape features that tell us about the past, including our natural history and civilization. Planning

has the potential to both safeguard historical assets and reveal their significance. The ongoing appreciation of these assets relies on their conservation and positive management, as well as measures that improve our interpretation and understanding of them.

- **Cultural legacy**

  Changes to culturally significant landscapes can often evoke deep feelings from those who value them. The planning system and cultural institutions have a key role to play in delivering sensitive change in areas with strong cultural identities, by safeguarding assets and better revealing their significance. This can extend to conserving and enhancing both undeveloped rural landscapes and built environments that contribute to cultural heritage.

7.3.2. OPPORTUNITIES & PRESSURES

Opportunities

- New development and planning gain may provide opportunities to conserve, enhance restore and create valued landscape features. The strengthened duty to seek to further the purpose of National Landscapes may provide further grounds for wider enhancements, potentially through offsetting and compensatory mechanisms, where impacts cannot be avoided or directly mitigated.
- Biodiversity net gain requirements can strengthen and enlarge ecological networks.
- The requirement for developments in the Poole Harbour catchment to be nutrient neutral may provide opportunities for beneficial landscape change and nature recovery.
- The popularity of Dorset as a destination to live and work and the resultant development pressure will create opportunities for securing planning gain.
- There are opportunities to enhance the sustainability and vitality of communities through increased provision of affordable housing in response to recognised local need.
- Emerging techniques in remote sensing and tranquillity modelling provide opportunities for improved monitoring of landscape features and condition.
- Neighbourhood planning provides a tool through which communities can direct growth toward locations that conserve and enhance local character.
- There are opportunities to soften the impact of traffic management schemes within villages through sensitive design measures, such as those contained within the traffic in villages toolkit.
- There are opportunities to improve sustainability through the implementation of small scale-renewable energy projects and community energy initiatives.
- Changes in agriculture may result in opportunities for the redevelopment of brownfield countryside sites that can meet existing and novel needs.
- Continued growth in demand for camping and glamping can provide good diversification opportunities, if sensitively designed and located, and there is some potential for cross-subsidisation of nature recovery and regenerative agriculture initiatives.
- Advances in communication technology have the potential to diversify the rural economy.
- Partnerships with artists and cultural organisations may provide creative approach to enhancing the public realm and appreciation of the landscape.
- Longevity and value-for-money in development can be achieved with high quality design and good materials.

Pressures

- Targets relating to housing and climate change:
    - The requirement on Local Planning Authorities to address housing need, which has been increasing, has implications for the potential identification of large-scale housing allocations within the National Landscape and its setting.
    - Net zero targets are driving considerable interest in large-scale renewable energy projects. This coupled with technological advances, increases the potential identification of sites within the National Landscape and its setting for projects such as solar arrays, onshore and offshore wind farms and battery energy storage systems. There may also be associated pressures arising from upgrades to the electrical transmission network that are also related to net zero targets.
- Demographics:
    - An increase in population brings a need for wider infrastructure and service upgrades.
    - Housing stock is not always well aligned with demand, for example in relation to property sizes and the amount of social rented homes.
    - Numerous second homes and informal holiday lets distort the housing market.
    - An ageing population affects the sustainability of some community facilities and services.
- Visitors and recreation:
    - The ability of popular areas to absorb further visitor pressure is finite and requires careful management.
    - Changes to recreational uses within the countryside, including increased activity, which can affect landscape character.
    - Overprovision of visitor accommodation affects levels of residential housing stock.
    - The popularity of some areas, particularly along the coast, brings significant pressure for expansion of camping and caravanning sites in sensitive locations.
    - Glamping can introduce semi-permanent features in sensitive areas.
    - Incremental changes are affecting rural roads, including signage, traffic management and road improvement initiatives.
- Proposed planning reforms could increase risks to natural beauty.
- Ongoing interest in oil and gas extraction within parts of the National Landscape.
- Changes to farming practices include a trend toward an increasing scale of operations with associated landscape and visual effects from farms.
- Improved requirements for the control of pollution from agriculture can result in substantial new infrastructure, such as slurry lagoons and covered silage storage.
- Subdivision of agricultural land can lead to increasingly diffuse agricultural development.
- Growing interest in viticulture and associated development such as wineries can affect both the pattern and character of the landscape.
- Coastal change and its management will result in pressure to defend and/or relocate assets.

7.3.3. ORGANISATIONS IMPORTANT TO DELIVERY

Local Planning, Highway and Flood Authorities, Statutory Undertakers, Natural England, Environment Agency, Marine Management Organisation, Town and Parish Councils, Community Partnerships and Neighbourhood Planning groups.

7.3.4. OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

OBJECTIVE C1: CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE NATIONAL LANDSCAPE AND ITS SETTING THROUGH THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Planning and development processes should seek to conserve and enhance the Dorset National Landscape, ensuring its setting and special qualities are protected for present and future generations. Sensitive siting, high-quality design, and robust management underpin all development, with major proposals subject to rigorous assessment and a strong presumption in favour of conserving and enhancing landscape character. Planning should recognise the character and beauty of the National Landscape, as well as the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services. The benefits of assets such as best and most versatile agricultural land, trees, woodland and other habitats should be conserved and enhanced.

Policy C1a: Development should seek to conserve and enhance the National Landscape

- Support development that conserves and enhances the National Landscape, ensuring.
- Ensure sensitive siting and design that respects local character.
- Only support development that does not conserve and enhance the National Landscape if it is necessary and in the public interest, with major proposals subject to detailed consideration of exceptional circumstances and public interest grounds.
- Encourage the conservation, enhancement, and restoration of characteristic landscape features, seeking net gain for landscape elements both on and off-site.
- Require high standards of design, materials, and workmanship, balancing viability with public benefit and landscape significance.
- Where primary design cannot address landscape and visual effects, require robust secondary mitigation, with consideration for compensation or offsetting for any residual adverse impacts. This reflects the mitigation hierarchy – avoidance, minimisation, restoration, and compensation.
- Require positive contributions to green infrastructure and ecological networks, ensuring all aspects are well-designed and enhance the landscape.
- Ensure full consideration of geodiversity conservation in relevant plans and strategies, recognising links with extraction industries and the built environment.
- Conserve and enhance the coast, maintaining its undeveloped and tranquil nature, and protect the World Heritage Site and its setting, where this coincides with Dorset National Landscape, from individual and cumulative impacts.
- Support natural process-led approaches to coastal management and implement coastal change management objectives.
- Manage the landward and seaward settings to conserve and enhance character, ensuring the assessment of views, noise, and wider environmental impacts.
- Support conservation and enhancement of the coastal and marine environment, including creation of Marine Protected Areas where appropriate.

OBJECTIVE C2: ENSURING EFFECTIVE LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

Robust landscape assessment and ongoing monitoring underpin sound planning decisions, ensuring proposals conserve and enhance the National Landscape's character and scenic beauty. Evidence-based decision-making and regular monitoring guide adaptive management and continuous improvement.

Policy C2a: Require high-quality landscape assessment and evidence-based planning

- Assess all proposals affecting the National Landscape to a high standard, with proportionate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments and Appraisals in line with industry guidelines.
- Use landscape and seascape character assessment to evaluate effects on the National Landscape's character and appearance.
- Ensure Local and Neighbourhood Plans are underpinned by robust landscape evidence.
- Test proposals against their ability to conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty, giving significant weight to the area's special qualities in planning decisions.
- Refuse proposals harmful to landscape character unless benefits clearly outweigh the protection afforded to the National Landscape; require mitigation, conditions, planning gain, or compensation where residual impacts remain.
- Monitor and assess changes in landscape condition to inform appropriate action.

OBJECTIVE C3: APPROPRIATE, NECESSARY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS SUPPORTED

Essential development that meets community or societal needs and supports the local economy is enabled, provided it is compatible with conserving and enhancing the National Landscape. Such development should be well designed and located, in response to local character and development patterns. Appropriate scale, form, mass and materials will be required. Regard is given to the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and the economic and social needs of local communities. Sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment are encouraged.

Policy C3a: Enable appropriate interventions that support landscape management

- Support appropriate farm diversification schemes, recognising their role in supporting farm resilience. Recognise potential contributions to conservation, enhancement, and sustainable development of the National Landscape that may be supported through diversification, such as nature recovery and regenerative agriculture.
- Encourage appropriate proposals to restore and reuse of traditional barns and buildings.
- Require minerals extraction to be delivered at appropriate scale and density, with high-quality restoration to benefit landscape, biodiversity, and access.
- Encourage projects that deliver and enable nature recovery, particularly where this would be secured in perpetuity.
- Encourage projects with positive environmental outcomes, such as improvements to the management of water resources for people and agriculture, as well as projects that reduce pollution.

Policy C3b: Enable appropriate development that supports community needs

- Enable affordable and social housing on appropriate rural exception sites that meet proven local need, with locally sensitive design.
- Encourage well-designed projects that reduce traffic impacts.

Policy C3c: Enable appropriate development that supports adaptation to, and mitigation of climate change

- Encourage measures to increase energy efficiency and support renewable energy production of appropriate scale, ensuring compatibility with National Landscape objectives. Large-scale development within the National Landscape and its setting will only be

considered permissible where impacts are limited in extent and severity. Furthermore, projects will be expected to deliver substantive mitigation and enhancement in line with the purpose of the National Landscape, which may include onsite and offsite measures.
- Encourage woodland planting and management proposals that enhance landscape character, biodiversity, connectivity, and public amenity, building resilience to climate change and disease.
- Encourage well-designed and landscape-sensitive green/blue infrastructure, including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and Natural Flood Management (NFM).

OBJECTIVE C4: AVOIDING HARMFUL DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTING SPECIAL QUALITIES

Development that harms the natural beauty, tranquillity, or special qualities of the National Landscape is avoided. Landscape character, biodiversity, dark night skies, and local distinctiveness are protected from inappropriate or excessive development. Where the setting of the Dorset and East Devon Coast WHS overlaps within Dorset National Landscape, protect the presentation and visitor experience of the Site.

Policy C4a: Prevent and mitigate negative impacts of development on landscape and visual character affecting the National Landscape

- Remove existing and avoid creating new features detrimental to landscape character, tranquillity, and special qualities.
- Protect and, where possible, enhance the quality of views into, within, and out of the National Landscape.
- Safeguard the pattern of landscape features, including settlements, that underpin local identity.
- Avoid and reduce cumulative effects that erode landscape character and quality.
- Avoid large-scale or high-density housing and employment development at settlement edges that weakens landscape quality.
- Avoid urbanisation and negative impacts from highway management.
- Conserve and enhance dark night skies and the unlit character of the countryside, avoiding and mitigating impacts from lighting.
- Protect the setting Dorset and East Devon Coast WHS and areas of Heritage Coast that fall within Dorset National Landscape.

Policy C4b: Prevent and mitigate negative impacts of development on nature

- Avoid and reduce impacts on wildlife and habitats, requiring the hierarchy of avoidance, minimisation, restoration, and compensation.. Encourage and support net gain for biodiversity that goes beyond the minimum requirements, ensuring measures conserve and enhance landscape character.

Policy C4c: Limit forms of development with the greatest potential for harm

- Protect the National Landscape from inappropriate and unnecessary forms of major development.
- Require use of previously developed land to limit expansion into sensitive countryside.
- Protect against overprovision of visitor accommodation, especially where it weakens landscape character and increases influence on vulnerable areas, such as the coast.
- Discourage growth in second homes within the National Landscape.

- Resist proliferation of masts and vertical structures, encouraging infrastructure sharing.
- Ensure coastal and flood defences, aquaculture, and fisheries development are compatible with the sensitivity of the undeveloped coastline.
- Require further oil and gas infrastructure to reuse or augment existing sites and contribute to landscape restoration.

7.4. WAYS OF WORKING

This chapter sets out principles by which the National Landscape Partnership operates. Abiding by these principles will encourage coherent, coordinated activity to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape and encourage equitable access to them.

7.4.1. SIGNIFICANCE

This chapter relates to the community and organisational environment in and around the Dorset National Landscape, rather than directly to its special qualities and natural beauty.

7.4.2. OPPORTUNITIES & PRESSURES

Opportunities

- The Dorset National Landscape is home to over 76,000 people: this is a considerable potential resource for activity which contributes towards the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty.
- Environmental data provision and curation is supported by strong organisations in Dorset; local datasets are frequently higher quality than national.
- The National Landscape Partnership occupies a position of trust and can act as an 'honest broker' bringing various interests together for project development or information provision.
- The National Landscape team has been building relationships with underserved communities and trusted representative organisations through initiatives such as FLAVOURS, Stepping into Nature and Nature Buddies, and has a strong track record in managing collaborative projects in practical delivery and engagement.
- Exemplar partnerships exist in and across the National Landscape facilitating the delivery of the aims within this management plan. These include Dorset Coast Forum, Dorset Food & Drink, Dorset Cultural Partnership, Dorset Tourism Association, Wild Purbeck Partnership and the Dorset Local Nature Partnership.

Pressures

- Many people experience barriers to getting involved in activities related to their local environment. Barriers are both real and perceptual, both limit the extent to which those people can experience and benefit from the special qualities of this place.
- Financial pressures are forcing Local Authorities to reduce staff numbers, meaning fewer staff cover a larger area; a loss of skills and experience and reduced capacity for engaging in new initiatives.
- Financial pressures on the wider delivery partnership have meant that there is reduced capacity to engage in new partnerships or initiatives; there is also reduced capacity to effectively engage community stakeholders.

7.4.3. ORGANISATIONS IMPORTANT TO DELIVERY

Local Authorities, Town and Parish Councils (including the Association for Town and Parish Councils), Catchment Partnerships, community-based environmental organisations (e.g. Dorset Climate Action Network and Planet Purbeck), Community Partnerships, Dorset Environmental Record Centre, Dorset History Centre, Kingston Maurward College, Natural England, National Trust, Dorset Museum and Art Gallery, arts, heritage and culture partners.

7.4.4. OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

OBJECTIVE D1: ENGAGING PEOPLE IN KEY DECISIONS RELATING TO THE NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

All relevant people are actively involved in key decisions affecting the National Landscape, ensuring that diverse voices shape its future. Inclusive participation and co-creation of initiatives foster lasting positive changes supported by the wider community.

Policy D1a: Support inclusive participation in National Landscape decision-making

- Broaden representation in National Landscape Partnership decision-making, actively including voices from underserved communities.
- Seek to co-design activities with the intended beneficiaries
- Engage with underserved communities, building relationships through trusted intermediaries and co-creating activities.

Policy D1b: Support diversification of the land management sector workforce

- Support activities which facilitate new entrants into farming, forestry, conservation and other nature-based sectors

D2: INFORMING DECISIONS WITH HIGH-QUALITY EVIDENCE AND BEST PRACTICES

Decisions are supported by the best available information, understanding, good practice, tools, and expertise. Robust research, assessment, and conservation practices guide effective management and positive change within the National Landscape.

Policy D2a: Support evidence-based decision-making and conservation practices

- Promote research and deeper understanding of the National Landscape's special qualities, landscape elements, and marine environment.
- Promote the use of landscape and seascape character assessment and mapped Local Nature Recovery Strategy opportunities to shape decisions.
- Promote understanding and application of conservation resources and tools for the natural and historic environment.
- Promote training in, and use of, conservation skills to conserve and enhance landscape character.
- Support the development and use of key information resources, repositories, and their managing organisations.

Policy D2b: Support the landscape approach and an understanding of landscape systems

- Support the understanding of the interconnectedness of landscapes, spaces where natural and human systems interact.
- Seek win-win solutions for people, nature and heritage.

OBJECTIVE D3: MONITORING AND ADAPTING TO ACHIEVE OPTIMAL OUTCOMES

Ongoing monitoring informs adaptive management, ensuring that strategies are effective in achieving desired outcomes. Continuous evaluation and adjustment of methods ensure progress towards objectives within the dynamic National Landscape.

Policy D3a: Implement monitoring to inform adaptation and improve outcomes

- Establish and maintain monitoring systems to track progress toward National Landscape Management Plan objectives.
- Regularly review monitoring data to assess the effectiveness of strategies and adapt approaches as needed.
- Share monitoring results with stakeholders to promote transparency and collaboration.
- Use monitoring data to inform future planning and decision-making processes.

Policy D3b: Engage local people in monitoring their environments

- Support citizen science engagement and the activities and tools that support it, such as volunteer coordination, training and equipment.

OBJECTIVE D4: DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE WORKING THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Strong partnerships across sectors enable effective delivery of National Landscape objectives, maximising resources and expertise. Collaborative approaches foster innovation, shared ownership, and sustainable outcomes for the landscape and its communities.

Policy D4a: Foster partnerships for effective landscape management and community engagement

- Develop and strengthen partnerships between public, private, and voluntary sectors to deliver National Landscape objectives.
- Coordinate activities across organisational boundaries to achieve integrated landscape management.
- Share resources, knowledge, and expertise to maximise impact and efficiency.
- Support community-led initiatives that contribute to National Landscape objectives.
- Support cultural initiatives that contribute to National Landscape objectives.

8. DELIVERY

This chapter describes the partnership's priorities, both geographic and thematic and how the impact of work will be monitored and how this related to national targets

This is an aspirational plan which requires the combined effort and resources of a wide range of partners as well as a supportive national legal and policy framework. The National Landscape Partnership acknowledge that conserving and enhancing natural beauty is not a central remit for many of these partners but assert that investment in delivery has returns for the environment, the community and for sustainable businesses.
Over the next 5 years, the National Landscape Partnership will produce an annual business plan with a time horizon beyond the year of the plan to ensure multi-year activities are supported. This will be primarily for those resources within its direct control. However, where partners view the value of their work's endorsement by inclusion within this annual plan, it will be welcomed.

8.1. PRIORITIES

The Partnership's team will prioritise its core responsibilities:

- Provision of high-quality advice on strategic planning, development management and agri-environment delivery.
- Securing additional resources to implement programmes of delivery which meet the objectives of this plan, including green finance.
- Promoting this plan, its vision and objectives to secure support for delivery.
- Supporting critical partnerships and projects that help deliver this plan's purposes.

In addition to its core roles, the National Landscape Partnership's team will prioritise the following areas of project activity:

8.1.1. THEMATIC

- Establishing an effective nature recovery network, including support for nature-friendly and regenerative forms of farming and forestry.
- Supporting climate change adaptation and the journey towards net zero
- Supporting activities which help a wide range people to connect with nature and the natural landscape, prioritising effort for those that face the most significant barriers.

8.1.2. AREA-BASED

- A landscape-scale project conserving natural and cultural landscape heritage, extent to be determined after a robust development phase; the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Landscape Connections programme is a likely support mechanism.
- Leading the catchment-based approach in the West Dorset Rivers and Coastal Streams catchment
- Landscape enhancements across the Wild Purbeck Nature Improvement Area by convening and chairing its partnership, seeking Landscape Recovery funding and working towards a new National Nature Reserve declaration on the Purbeck Coast.
- Visitor management and visitor experience enhancement across the Jurassic Coast and using that expertise to develop greater inland opportunities.

The Partnership will remain flexible enough to support, shape or lead relevant opportunities to deliver this policy framework where they arise.

8.2. MONITORING IMPACT

It is important that the Partnership is aware of the effects of its work and the background trends in this landscape to be able to adapt management in terms of geographic targeting and thematic approaches. It is also important that the collective impact of the work of the National Landscape Family is reported to Government, in order to provide ministers with information to justify continuation of their support.

8.2.1. PROTECTED LANDSCAPE TARGETS AND OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

Set by government in January 2024, these are key Environmental Improvement Plan targets "to motivate more activity [within protected landscapes] on the components needed to ensure wildlife can thrive". These are targets for everyone engaged in activity in protected landscapes, not solely for the Protected Landscape organisations. Delivery towards achieving them is contingent on an adequate supply of resources to enable change. Resources for achieving these outcomes may be public funds (e.g. agri-environment schemes), private funds via novel green finance solutions, or incorporated into development schemes by statutory undertakers (e.g. habitat creation related to new water treatment infrastructure).

Thriving plants and wildlife:

- Target 1: Restore or create more than 250,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats within Protected Landscapes, outside protected sites by 2042 (from a 2022 baseline). In Dorset National Landscape this equates to 11,506 hectares
- Target 2: Bring 80% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes into favourable condition by 2042.
- Target 3: For 60% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes assessed as having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition by 31 January 2028.
- Target 4: Continuing favourable management of all existing priority habitat already in favourable condition outside of SSSIs (from a 2022 baseline) and increasing to include all newly restored or created habitat through agri-environment schemes by 2042.
- Target 5: Ensuring at least 65% to 80% of land managers adopt nature friendly farming on at least 10% to 15% of their land by 2030.

Mitigating and adapting to climate change:

- Target 6: Reduce net greenhouse gas emissions in Protected Landscapes to net zero by 2050 relative to 1990 levels.
- Target 7: Restore approximately 130,000 hectares of peat in Protected Landscapes by 2050.

Target 8: Increase tree canopy and woodland cover (combined) by 3% of total land area in Protected Landscapes by 2050 (from 2022 baseline). In Dorset National Landscape this equates to an additional 9,414 hectares. In support of these targets, the Dorset National Landscape Partnership will:

- a plan and begin delivering activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and work towards creating a Net Zero Roadmap.

Create a Climate Change Adaptation Plan and an associated funnel of activities that begin to address the risks and opportunities from climate change.

Enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment targets:

- Target 9 Improve and promote accessibility to and engagement with Protected Landscapes for all using existing metrics in our Access for All programme.
- Target 10: Decrease the number of nationally designated heritage assets at risk in Protected Landscapes.

The Dorset National Landscape baseline is described in the State of the National Landscape report; movement towards achieving the outcomes will be reported annually using the national indicator dataset.

8.2.2. LOCAL INDICATORS

31 national statistical data sets, including five that directly contribute to the Government's Environment Improvement Plan, are used to monitor progress. These are set out in the State of the Dorset National Landscape report. These data have been used to inform our Strategic Environmental Assessment, which accompanies this plan.

THE DORSET NATIONAL LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

The National Landscape Partnership Board includes representation from:

- Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils
- Dorset Council
- Dorset Local Access Forum
- Dorset Local Nature Partnership
- Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society
- Dorset Race Equality Council
- Dorset Wildlife Trust
- Country Land & Business Association
- Devon County Council
- East Devon District Council
- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- National Farmers' Union
- National Trust
- Natural England
- Somerset Council

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